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A History of the American Sunday School Curriculum

By

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TO MY WIFE

WHOSE DEVOTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT
HAVE BEEN MY CONSTANT INSPIRATION



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PREFACE

THE purpose of this book is to relate the history of the religious curriculum found in the Sunday schools of America during the National Period (1800-1925). The method has been to trace the origin and development of the Sunday-school curriculum, to examine the materials used in the various periods of the history of the Sunday school and to present examples of such materials in order to illustrate the objectives and major emphases in this field. An attempt has been made to show how the Sunday-school curriculum has evolved out of the socio-religious process, in order that the outstanding developments in the religious curriculum may be viewed and evaluated in the light of their contribution to the whole religious education movement.

Judged by modern standards it would seem that the Sunday school during the National Period had little more than a course of study, which could not be called a curriculum in the modern sense of the word. In this study, however, the term "curriculum" is used to denote the materials in printed form which the Sunday school has used to achieve its religious objectives. In this connection it must be taken into consideration that there has been a gradual development in the fundamental aim of religious education, with corresponding changes in the actual curriculum.

Beginning with the colonial background our treatment proceeds by the following steps: (1) the rise of the Sunday school and the contemporary changes in public education; (2) a treatment of the doctrinal emphasis in the curriculum as expressed in the catechism; (3) the Bible as the study book of the Sunday school represented by the *Selected Lesson* and the *Question Book*; (4) the development of the *International Uniform System* of Sunday-school lessons; and (5) the development of a graded curriculum.

In developing this outline several considerations determined the treatment. *First*, this study limits itself to the Protestant

Church and makes no attempt to cite or interpret the curricula used by Catholics, Mormons, Jews, or other groups. *Second*, the catechism, the Bible studied in the form of a question book, and the Uniform System of lessons are all considered to have passed their zenith. On the other hand, the movement for a graded curriculum is evidently still gathering force. The graded Sunday-school system is comparatively new, and in a sense, is a coming movement. In the very nature of the case, therefore, it is impossible to judge its defects and contributions except in a limited way. This study, being historical in its purpose, attempts to make a detailed analysis of the curricula of the American Sunday school, except the graded materials, giving only a brief summary of this field. The causes leading to the development of the graded curriculum are noted, the representative series summarized, and their main characteristics pointed out. *Third*, only incidental attention has been given to the musical and pictorial aspects of the curriculum. Their consideration would not only have added to the size of the task, but, further, if their evaluations and interpretations are to possess weight, the service of experts in these specific fields is required.

Insofar as possible the information covered in this volume has been gathered from source materials. Authorities have been used freely to cover the actual transitions of the Sunday school in nineteenth- and twentieth-century America. In the study of materials, objectives, and methods, the attempt has been made to present source material whenever available. In some cases, however, this was not found to be possible, for much of the source material is very old and has not been wisely preserved. In such instances it became necessary to rely upon authorities rather than sources.

A word of thanks is due to all publishers and other holders of copyrights for permission to quote materials used in this book. Quotations and excerpts have been made from the following:

Evolution of the Sunday School, by Henry F. Cope, The Pilgrim Press, Boston; *The New England Primer*, Twentieth Century Reprint, by Ginn and Company, New York; *History of the Public School Society of New York*, by William O. Bourne, William

Wood & Company, New York; *Bible History*, by the United Lutheran Publication House, Philadelphia; *Trust in God* and *God's Great Family*, by the Morehouse Publishing Company, Milwaukee; *History of Education in the United States*, by Edwin Grant Dexter, and *Psychology of Childhood*, by Norsworthy and Whitley, The Macmillan Company, New York; *Public Education in the United States*, by Ellwood P. Cubberly, The Houghton Mifflin Company, New York; *The International Lesson System*, by John R. Sampey, The Fleming H. Revell Company, New York; *Luther's Small Catechism* and *The Graded Memory Course for Evangelical Lutheran Sunday Schools*, The Concordia Publishing Company, Saint Louis; *Protestant Thought Before Kant*, by Arthur C. McGiffert, and *History of American Christianity* by Leonard W. Bacon, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York; Peloubet's *Select Notes on the International Sunday School Lessons*, W. A. Wilde Company, Boston; *Primary Teacher's Text Book*, Third year, Part I, by Marion Thomas, Eaton and Mains, New York; *An Outline of a Bible-School Curriculum*, by George W. Pease, University of Chicago Press, Chicago; *God Revealing His Truth Through Patriarch*, by Walter A. Squires, Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, Philadelphia; *Religious Education*, Chicago, Illinois; *The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union* and *Important and Remarkable Epochs in the History of Sunday Schools*, by Edwin Wilbur Rice, American Sunday School Union Press, Philadelphia.

To Miss Lydia E. Bucknell, of Philadelphia, I am indebted for valuable assistance while collecting data in the library of the American Sunday School Union. The study could hardly have been made without the co-operation of Samuel Gardner Ayres, Librarian of Garrett Biblical Institute. I am especially indebted to Professor John E. Stout of Northwestern University for counsel in planning the study and to Doctor Marion O. Hawthorne, of Northwestern University, for helpful criticism of the manuscript.

FRANK L. LANKARD.

Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, 1927.

CHAPTER I

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE COLONIAL PERIOD

COLONIAL education was largely transplanted from the Old World. In its new setting, however, it developed certain trends that were distinctly American. It is the purpose of this chapter to trace distinctive developments of Colonial education.

COLONIAL EDUCATION DOMINANTLY RELIGIOUS

The first schools in America were clearly religious. To be convinced of this fact one has only to examine the curriculum of the early colonial schools and he will find that, until the time of the American Revolution, the Bible and the catechism constituted the bulk of the materials used.¹

This practice seems to have originated in the Protestant Reformation, when the authority of the Bible took precedence over the authority of the church. But before the Bible could assume such an important place in the religious life of all the people, the pupil had to be taught to read it. To this end, Luther and other great Protestant leaders became interested in universal education. Although Luther was eager to develop good citizens as well as good churchmen, his chief interest was in cultivating the religious life of the people. Universal education did not spring up as if by magic, but in all countries where the influence of the Reformation was felt there developed an interest in and necessity for education.

In the light of this background, we are not surprised that colonial America (dominantly Protestant) early took steps toward the promotion of elementary education; for the desire of Protestants was that all people might possess the ability to read the Scriptures. In America, however, another tendency was at work

¹ Barnard, Henry, *American Journal of Education*, vol. xiii, 1863, p. 746.

making for elementary education—the rise of democratic ideas. In this connection Mr. E. E. White has written: “With matchless wisdom they [our colonial forefathers] joined liberty and learning in a perpetual and holy alliance, finding the latter to bless every child with instruction, which the former invests with the rights and duties of citizenship. They made education and sovereignty coextensive, by making both universal.”² With the religious and democratic ideals so deeply embedded in the hearts and minds of the immigrants to America we should naturally expect to find the early establishment of elementary schools with a course of study in which religion was given a chief place.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION NOT UNIVERSAL IN THE AMERICAN COLONIES

The desire for universal elementary education was not felt alike by all of the American colonies. The Southern colonies, for example, were not favorable to the education of the masses. The rich planters considered it their peculiar privilege to provide for the education of their children without the assistance of the community or of the State. Thus, throughout the South, the training of children, for the most part, was in the hands of tutors, or private elementary and secondary schools fashioned after the Latin schools of England. The Latin schools were tuition schools of secondary grade and patronized by those of means and standing. Moreover, the Latin-grammar schools not only in the South but throughout America, gave evidence of the same religious interest. Here again the reading consisted of religious materials except when the reading was done in the original Latin language. The English readers contained materials from the Bible and from the catechism. Grammar schools demanded church attendance on the part of their pupils and required them to present reports on the Sunday sermon. In the Southern colonies there was also apprenticeship training for poor boys who had been bound out to artisans. The colony of Virginia, after several unsuccessful attempts, succeeded in organizing a college in 1692. By 1750 a fair provision had been made for secondary

² White, E. E., *Proceedings of National Education Association*, 1882.

and higher education. But common schools in this section of the country made little progress and the children of the masses, except for rather meager trade training, were greatly neglected.³

THE PAROCHIAL SCHOOL IN THE MIDDLE COLONIES

The middle colonies, such as New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and Pennsylvania, held to the idea that the church should direct the training of children. Thus it came about that each parish maintained its own school. No one sect could possibly provide education for the entire community, since in each community there were so many denominations present. In view of the diversity of race and dissimilarity of religious beliefs among the people, each parish had to have its own school. The parochial school aimed to keep the religious interest very prominent in the lives of the pupils; in fact, its main purpose was to teach the beliefs and practices of the particular church by which it was maintained. The parochial school performed the double function of giving instruction in the rudiments of knowledge as well as in religion, thus giving the religious element a large place in the curriculum; that is to say, the Bible and the catechism were the chief books used.⁴

THE GENESIS OF THE AMERICAN FREE SCHOOL

The origin of an elementary school in the New England colonies proved to be the precursor of our present-day free school system. In these colonies, education was not left to the wealthy, nor was it administered by the parish as a distinctively parish school. The fact that the settlers of New England were somewhat more homogeneous in race, in conditions of life, and in religious matters meant that the educational policy of the New England colonies would be unlike that of the Southern colonies with their class differences, or the parish system of the middle colonies. Since the people of New England were so much alike in politics and religion, the town became the administrative unit in both; in fact, the New England town was a political unit largely under church

³ Cubberly, Ellwood P., *Public Education in the United States*, p. 22.

⁴ Graves, Frank P., *Student's History of Education*, p. 194.

control. Accordingly, the attempt was made to arrange a curriculum predominantly religious, one that would train not only for citizenship but especially for the religious life. This was also true of higher education to such an extent that the first colleges were founded for the express purpose of preparing men for the ministry.

Colonial educational legislation. The educational legislation of the colonies furnishes an excellent source of information as to the importance attached to education by the colonists. A few examples showing the nature of the legislative acts of the colonies may be cited. In 1642 the colonial court of Massachusetts decreed that the Select Men of each town should be charged with seeing that parents and masters trained their children in learning and labor. Furthermore, these Select Men were to take account, from time to time, of all parents and masters to find out whether or not the children understood the principles of religion and the capital laws of this country. It was their further duty to impose fines upon those parents and masters found derelict in these duties.⁵

The Massachusetts law of 1647 is exceedingly definite with reference to the dual function of education. It reads as follows:

"It being one of the chief objects of that old deluder Satan to keep men from a knowledge of the Scriptures, as in former times, keeping them in an unknown tongue, so in these latter times, by persuading them from the use of tongues, so that at least the true sense and meaning of the original might be clouded by false glosses of saint-seeming deceivers, and that learning may not be buried in the grave of our fathers in church and commonwealth—the Lord assisting our endeavors—it is therefore ordered that every township in this jurisdiction, after the Lord hath increased them to the number of fifty householders, shall then forthwith appoint one within their town to teach all such children as shall resort to him to write and read. And it is forthwith ordered that where any town shall increase to the number of a hundred families or householders, they shall set up a grammar school,

⁵ *Records of the Massachusetts Colony*, vol. ii, p. 6.

the master thereof being able to instruct youth so far as they may to be fitted for the university. . . ."⁶

During the seventeenth century the only subjects taught by the legislative requirement in Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, Connecticut, New Amsterdam, and New Sweden were reading, writing, religion, and capital laws.⁷ In the early records and documents there is no mention of either spelling or arithmetic, but religion is emphatically stressed. During the eighteenth century, religion and capital laws were taught together. The important fact in this connection is that religion was required to be taught in the day schools, for the colonists were unable to conceive of a system of education that did not include it. Thus they shared the viewpoint expressed in Wesley's *Instructions to Children* in which it is stated, "They [the children] can be taught the knowledge of God and his kingdom and be taught their letters at the same time."⁸

ATTEMPTS TO SATISFY THE DEMAND FOR READING MATERIALS

In those early days reading seems to have been emphasized above all other studies, and in some cases there appears almost an exclusive cultivation of this branch of learning. When the colonists found themselves without primers and readers they very naturally resorted to Testaments and Bibles, since these were to be found in most of the homes. Consequently, throughout New England, the church books, such as the Psalter, Testament, catechism, and Bible, were quite generally used in place of the primers, spelling books, and the readers which the Puritans had known in the homeland.⁹

Although religious books predominated in the schools during earlier days in America, other books were also used. Edwin Dexter says that when our forefathers left their homes in Europe to make for themselves new homes in America, they included

⁶ *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England*, Edited by Nathaniel Shurtleff, p. 203.

⁷ Dexter, Edwin Grant, *A History of Education in the United States*, p. 156.

⁸ Wesley, John, *Instructions to Children*, Preface to seventh edition, London, 1760.

⁹ Dexter, Edwin Grant, *History of Education in the United States*, p. 208.

among their other worldly goods the Psalter, the Testament, the Bible, and the little books of their childhood, from which they had learned their letters and their prayers—the *Hornbook*, *A*, *B*, *C*, *Primer*, *Book of Civilitie*, and *Spelling Book*.¹⁰ Dexter further says, that “practically all the books used for elementary education during the first century of colonial life were religious in their general nature, but they were religious in varying degree. The Catechism, the Psalter, the Testament, and the Bible formed a class of purely theological books, while the *Hornbook*, the *A*, *B*, *C*, the *Primer*, and the *Book of Manners* formed another class, partly devotional and partly secular.”¹¹ In the colonial period there was imported from England the famous *Hornbook*, which was used to teach children the alphabet and the simplest elements of reading.

The Hornbook. The peculiar name is derived not from the nature of the contents, but from its form. It was not a book in the modern sense of the word at all, but, rather, was a piece of wood shaped somewhat like a paddle (and likely often used as such), bearing on the upper smooth side a printed sheet, which was covered by transparent horn, from which the instrument derived its name. The printing consisted of the alphabet in large and small letters, the apostolic benediction, and the Lord’s Prayer.

In England the use of the *Hornbook* antedated the art of printing. The poet Cowper thus describes it.

“Neatly secured from being soiled or torn,
Beneath a pane of this transparent horn,
A book (to please us at a tender age),
'Tis called a book, though but a single page,
Presents the prayer the Saviour designed to teach
Which children use, and parsons when they preach.”¹²

The purpose of the *Hornbook* was to teach children the rudiments of reading, in order that they might be prepared to study

¹⁰ Dexter, Edwin Grant, *History of Education in the United States*, p. 208.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 207. Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

¹² Peck, Ellen Brainerd, *Early Text Books in Connecticut*, p. 62.

the catechism and the Bible. Cubberly says that practically all reading in the early colonial education was confined to the *Hornbook*, the catechism, and the Bible.¹³

The New England Primer. Near the close of the seventeenth century the *Hornbook* was superseded by the *New England Primer*, which gained great popularity throughout New England and the middle colonies. It was undoubtedly the most important book in the elementary course of study during the eighteenth century. The *New England Primer* is found to embody, not only those items contained in the *Hornbook*, but much more material, both secular and religious, the religious being in the preponderance.

In the foreword of the Twentieth Century reprint (by Ginn & Company) it is stated that the *New England Primer* was one of the greatest books ever published, that it reflected in a marvelous way the spirit of the age, and that it probably had more influence in New England and the middle colonies than any book except the Bible in producing those sturdy generations that gave to America its liberty and its institutions.

The *New England Primer*, to a remarkable degree, revealed the character of the Puritans and was called the little Bible of New England.¹⁴ It had stiff oak covers, unbeautiful prose, rough and stern poetry, and crude pictures.

The contents of the *Primer* were organized into quite distinct sections and included quotations from the Bible, the alphabet, the vowels, followed by the consonants, double letters, italic double letters, capital and small letters; a syllabarium, containing easy syllables for children, the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed; and alphabetical rimes, often accompanied by wood-cuts. A few samples of rimes containing the religious elements are included here.

• "He that ne'er learns his A. B. C.,
For ever will a Blockhead be;
But he that learns these Letters fair,
Shall have a Coach to take the Air."

¹³ Cubberly, Ellwood P., *Public Education in the United States*, p. 30.

¹⁴ Peck, Ellen Brainerd, *Early Text Books in Connecticut*, p. 62.

A HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN

"In Adam's Fall
We sinned all."

"*Samuel* anoints
Whom *God* appoints."

"A Dog will bite
A Thief at night."

"Job feels the rod,
Yet blesses God."

"Xerxes the great did die,
And so must you and I."

One finds that the wood-cuts were illustrative of the central idea in the rime. For example, Samuel is shown anointing with the holy oil the one chosen by Jehovah to be the king. There was an alphabetical acrostic containing lessons for youth, the theme being of a moral and religious nature. For example, following the letter C is to be found "Come unto Christ, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and he will give you Rest." There was a section including materials intended to teach children their duty to God and neighbors, and a cradle hymn by Isaac Watts and verses for little children, such as:

"Our days begin with trouble here,
Our life is but a span;
And cruel Death is always near,
So frail a thing is man.
Then sow the seeds of Grace while young
That when you come to die,
Thou may'st sing forth that triumph song,
Death, where's thy victory?"

This is followed by an account of the martyrdom of John Rogers, accompanied by a wood-cut illustrating the event. This section also contains instructions to children written by John Rogers just before his death. A very interesting section consists of only three sentences: the infant's grace before and after meals, and a child's prayer. These sentences are as follows:

"Praying will make us leave Sinning or Sinning will make us leave Praying."
"Our Weaknesses and Inabilities break not the Bond of our Duties."

"What we are afraid to speak before men, we should be afraid to think before God."

The various editions of the *New England Primer* included interchangeably "The *Shorter Catechism* agreed upon by the Reverend Assembly of Divines at Westminster" and John Cotton's Children's Catechism, called *Spiritual Milk for American Babes, Drawn Out of the Breasts of both Testaments for their Souls Nourishment*. A few questions are cited here as illustrative of the *Shorter Catechism*.

Q. How many persons are there in the Godhead?

A. There are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

Q. How did God create man?

A. God created man, male and female, after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the creatures.

Q. How can we be made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ?

A. We are made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ by the effectual appropriation of it to us by his holy Spirit.

John Cotton's catechism being simpler than the Westminster, was designed for younger children. Examples are:

Q. What is the first commandment?

A. Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.

Q. What is the meaning of this commandment?

A. That we should worship the only true God and no other before Him.

Q. What is the second commandment?

A. That we should worship the only true God with our worship such as he hath ordained not such as man hath invented.

The *Primer* closes with a dialogue between Christ, youth, and the devil, which was to serve as an object lesson to youth to serve Christ, and thus avoid the fate of being eternally damned in hell.

Almost one half of the book is given over to biblical or quasi-biblical material and, in addition, the moral lessons and Christian virtues extolled make up a great proportion of the remainder of the book.¹⁵ The method was memoriter and catechetical, therefore mechanical and unsuited to the needs, interests, and capacities of children.

¹⁵ Crawford, Leonidas W., *The Status and Evaluation of Extra-Biblical Material in the Curriculum of Religious Education in the United States*, p. 14, unpublished thesis, Northwestern University.

The *New England Primer* passed through numerous editions and wielded a tremendous influence throughout the Colonial Period. It was practically the only reading book for home and school until 1750 and continued to be the most widely used book in America until the publication of the famous *American Spelling Book*, by Noah Webster, in 1783.¹⁶ The use of the *New England Primer* seems to have been revived in the National Period. In 1836 the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society (an agency of the Congregational Church) republished the *New England Primer*, which introduced the book into many New England homes, and into Sunday-school libraries throughout the West, wherever there were such libraries. Some ten thousand copies were distributed in Illinois alone, by the generous gift of one layman.¹⁷

In addition to providing practice in reading, the *New England Primer* also succeeded in supplying material for a kind of religious instruction. When one considers that this book represents only the beginning of American education, one must be less drastic in his criticism of the educational viewpoint and practices embodied in its pages. The book is markedly material-centered, rather than child-centered; it stresses preparation for future life rather than for this life. Religious observances and moral conduct are motivated by fear of punishment or by hope of reward. God is portrayed as stern, vengeful, exacting, cruel—a conception reflecting to some extent the stern and barren life of the early colonists. The concepts presented are in adult phraseology, unsuited to the immature minds of children. Often the poems are found to be inelegant in form and unattractive in sentiment. However, valid as these criticisms may be, one cannot gainsay the fact that the *New England Primer* deserves due commendation for having contributed largely to the early educational development of our country, not only in supplying the rudiments of knowledge but also the fundamentals of religion as it was then conceived.

The *New England Primer* reveals the colonial objective of

¹⁶ Barnard, Henry, *American Journal of Education*, vol. xiii, 1863, p. 746.

¹⁷ *A Brief History of the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society and of the Rise and Progress of Sabbath Schools in the Orthodox Congregational Denominations in Massachusetts*, p. 16.

education, which was to produce a citizen possessing the tools of knowledge and the fundamentals of religion. It is to be remembered that the religious curriculum of this period was not in the hands of the Sunday school (an institution not yet existent as we know it), nor was it administered apart from the regular school system, insofar as there was a system. The *Primer*, for example, was an elementary school reader. The religious material was part and parcel of the regular, reading day schools and Latin-grammar schools of New England, the parish schools of the middle colonies, and in the Latin-grammar schools of the Southern colonies.

THE TREND TOWARD SECULARIZATION

Even though the aim and subject matter of the colonial schools were primarily religious, a tendency or trend toward the secularization of education, which began within the colonial period and reached its fruition in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, must be noted. As early as 1750 there is evidence of a tendency somewhat away from the strictly religious curriculum which had been so deeply embedded in the schools, and the faint beginning of a new type of material a little more secular in its nature appears.¹⁸

The spelling books. About the middle of the eighteenth century there came about a gradual differentiation of spelling from reading,¹⁹ and the spelling books began to assume a secular nature. Among the most successful of the new spellers was one by Dillworth entitled, *A New Guide to the English Tongue*. This was introduced into the colonies from England in 1750 and was the first of a series of texts which were in time to displace the biblical material. Spelling books in those days contained more than words to spell, but also material for reading and a little grammar, as in the case of Dillworth's.²⁰ The reading material, as well as the word lists in the Dillworth speller, shows gradation; that is,

¹⁸ Cubberly, Ellwood P., *Public Education in the United States*, p. 59ff.

¹⁹ Dexter, Edwin Grant, *History of Education in the United States*, p. 213.

²⁰ William Darlington in a letter to Henry Barnard describing school books about the time of the Revolution and following, says that the Dillworth speller contained a little elementary grammar. Barnard, Henry, *American Journal of Education*, vol. xiii, pp. 742-743.

there are easy sentences for the beginners and longer sentences for the more advanced students, including illustrated fables and selections from the Psalter.²¹

The reading material in this speller was less religious in its origin and emphasis than that of the *New England Primer*, though largely moral and religious in character. All of the easy reading sentences for children were taken from the Psalter. Some editions of this book contained the catechism, giving to the speller a decidedly religious tone. All the spellers before the Revolution contained much biblical material. However, the secular material in the Dillworth speller is sufficient to justify the statement that this book marks the beginning of a departure from the characteristic religious nature of the *Hornbook* and the *New England Primer*. The secular material in the books following the Dillworth speller increased to such an extent that it finally succeeded in displacing the biblical and religious selections.

Rise of the American schoolbooks. Before the Revolutionary War most of the schoolbooks had been imported from England, but following the Revolution there appeared a great number of native American books expressing the free, independent spirit of the new republic.²² Early in the National Period the *New England Primer* was rapidly displaced by new readers more secular in nature. Following the Revolution the colonial schools used spellers, readers, arithmetics, grammars, geographies, and histories as never before.²³

The catalogue of the Boston High School for Girls for the year 1827 states that the candidates for admission shall be examined in reading, writing, modern geography, and arithmetic, and shall be able to parse fluently any English composition in either prose or verse. From this statement it is evident that no stress was laid on the mastery of religious materials in the entrance require-

²¹ Mr. Joseph T. Buckingham in a personal letter to Henry Barnard, in which he is describing schools about the close of the eighteenth century, says that the Dillworth speller, in addition to the word lists and selections from the Psalter, contained certain fables such as Jupiter and the Frogs, The Romish Priest, the Jester, Hercules and the Wagoner. Barnard, Henry, *American Journal of Education*, Vol. xiii, pp. 129-132.

²² Boone, Richard G., *Education in the United States*, p. 66. In this reference, Mr. Boone says, "Scarcely had the war closed, when texts were published in such numbers and quality as revolutionized the methods of teaching."

²³ Dexter, Edwin G., *History of Education in United States*, p. 214.

ments, the curriculum having transcended in its interests the narrow and religious content of the colonial school.

The spelling books reached their climax in the work of Noah Webster. Webster's *American Spelling Book* appeared in 1783, and was fashioned after Dillworth's speller, except that it was more secular in nature. The work was in three parts, the first containing word lists and geographical information concerning countries and towns, the second containing the elements of grammar, and the third consisting of reading selections. Examples drawn from all parts of the book express religious sentiments and inculcate right conduct. This is true both of isolated sections and connective narrative.

Webster's speller has been partially described in Barnard's *Journal*:

Who can forget his first introduction to those four and twenty characters, standing in stiff upright columns, in their Roman and italic dress, beginning with little *a*, and ending with that non-de-script "and per se"; or his first lesson in combining letters,

ba, be, bi, bo, bu, by

or his joy in reading words of two syllables,

ba ker bri er ci der

or his exultation in learning to "know his duty" in those "Lessons of easy words" beginning,

No man may put off the law of God;

or the more advanced steps, both in length of words and stubborn morality, in pursuit of

The wicked flee

and closing his spelling career with

Om pom pa noo suc

Mich il li mach a nack

and

Ail to be troubled

Ale malt liquor²⁴

Of the eight fables one will be given in detail as typical of the group:

OF THE BOY THAT STOLE APPLES

An old man found a rude boy up in one of his trees stealing apples, and desired him to come down; but the young sauce-box told him plainly he would not. "Won't you?" said the old man, "then I will fetch you down"; so he pulled up some tufts of grass and threw at him; but this only made the young-

²⁴ Barnard, Henry, *American Journal of Education*, vol. xxxii, p. 966.

ster laugh, to think that the old man should pretend to beat him down from the tree with grass only.

"Well, well," said the old man, "if neither words nor grass will do, I must try what virtue there is in stones;" so the old man pelted him heartily with stones; which soon made the young chap hasten down from the tree and beg the old man's pardon.

Moral

If good words and gentle means will not reclaim the wicked, they must be dealt with in a most severe manner.

The fable is accompanied by a wood-cut showing the boy up in the tree and the old man pelting him with stones.²⁵

The other seven fables are entitled: "The Country Maid and Her Milk Pail," "The Cat and the Rat," "The Fox and the Swallow," "The Fox and the Bramble," "The Partial Judge," "The Bear and the Two Friends," and "The Two Dogs."

A few of the most important native American schoolbooks appearing shortly after the Revolution will be noted. Noah Webster says that aside from the Bible, Psalter, Testament, and Dillworth's speller, there were no reading books before the publication of the third part of his *Institute* in 1785.²⁶ The *Little Reader's Assistant*, by Webster, appeared in 1790. Joseph T. Buckingham says that following Webster's *Third Book* (so called) which appeared about 1793, there appeared a new edition furnishing new reading material—selections from the New Testament, a chapter of Proverbs, and a set of tables.²⁷ No date for this publication is given. Webster's books enjoyed great popularity. His speller was the greatest of the early spellers and his reading books were introduced wherever his speller was used. Bingham's *American Preceptor* (a graded reader) was published in 1794. With the opening of the new century a number of other new readers appeared. The *Columbian Primer*, which was published in 1802, was in many respects like the *New England Primer* except that its material was more secular and more in keeping

²⁵ Barnard, Henry, *American Journal of Education*, vol. xxxii, p. 966.

²⁶ Noah Webster makes this statement in a letter to Henry Barnard in which he is describing schools just after the Revolution, *American Journal of Education*, vol. xiii, p. 124.

²⁷ Joseph T. Buckingham is responsible for this statement in a letter to Henry Barnard in which he describes schools following the Revolutionary War. Barnard, Henry, *American Journal of Education*, vol. xiii, pp. 129-132.

with the spirit of the times. In the same year, there appeared the *Franklin Primer*, also a reading book containing a great many moral lessons, far more secular in tone than the *New England Primer*. In 1803 the *Understanding Reader* and the *Thorough Scholar English Grammar* were produced by Daniel Adams. The *Columbian Orator*, containing selections of both prose and poetry considered by the author to be suitable for the purpose of declamation, was published in 1806.

America, along with Europe, shared in some measure at least a distinct lowering of interest in religion during the latter part of the eighteenth century. The secular spirit of the age was reflected in the readers of the time—an echo of the political and social changes in the new land. In view of this situation it is not difficult to understand why the Bible was quite rapidly displaced as a reading book in the American schools.

Arithmetics were few in the Colonial Period. Hodder's *Arithmetic*, an imported book, was used exclusively until the close of the eighteenth century.²⁸ Pike published an arithmetic in 1785, of a more advanced nature than the book by Hodder. This arithmetic claimed new systems, included more problems, and contained in the appendix a short introduction to the study of Algebra, intended for use in academies. This book marks a considerable advance in the development of arithmetic.

Following the Revolution, English grammar received more attention. Although the early spellers had attempted, in a small way, to provide training in grammar, textbooks began to appear which had for their specific purpose the study of English grammar. Caleb Bingham's *Young Ladies' Accidence*, published in 1790, was one of the first books on English grammar and the very first to be introduced into the Boston schools, where it remained for some time.²⁹ A grammar published by Lindley Murray in 1795 proved very popular.

No history was studied in the colonial schools prior to the Revolution. After the war, however, Noah Webster wrote a short history (published in 1788) which was an account of the

²⁸ Boone, Richard G., *Education in the United States*, p. 67.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

transactions in the United States after the Revolutionary War.³⁰ In 1799 Hannah Adams wrote *The Abridgment of the History of New England*.

No geography as such was studied before the publication of a small book on the subject by Doctor Morse in 1784. This book was widely used for a half century. (Some geographical material was scattered through the readers and grammars but it was only incidental.) A little later than Doctor Morse's publication there appeared a book known as a *Catechetical System of Geography* which was produced by Nathaniel Dwight. This book does not seem to have had the influence as the one by Doctor Morse.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

From this survey of the colonial curriculum before 1750, as provided by the laws and ordinances for founding and promoting schools and as found in the actual materials used, it appears that the religious objective and element held undisputed sway. Cubberly has expressed it well: "One learned to read chiefly the catechism and the Bible, and to know the will of the heavenly Father. There was scarcely any other purpose in the maintenance of elementary schools."³¹

The aim of that early period was to produce a religious citizenship, the civic aim being felt particularly in New England. It is clearly expressed again in the founding of higher institutions of learning. A deep religious motive coupled with an expanding democratic ideal was the driving motive for the establishment of schools and which caused the religious element to be deeply embedded in the course of study. All this leads one to say that the colonial day school was primarily religious in its aim and in the subject matter.

By 1750 began to appear evidences of change in the curriculum of the colonies. At this time a slight tendency developed to neglect the religious materials and to include more secular materials in the curricula. Dillworth's *Guide to the English Tongue* is

³⁰ This book did not aim to give any comprehensive summary of American history. It aimed only to give the outstanding events in the new nation since the Revolutionary War. But being the only history written, it was introduced into the schools as a textbook on history.

³¹ Cubberly, Ellwood P., *Public Education in the United States*, p. 28.

an evidence of this tendency. This tendency increased steadily and was greatly accelerated by the American Revolution. Two causes seem to have been at work here. First, America shared in the general religious decline of the eighteenth century; and, second, the gaining of independence promoted interest in political and civic aspects of American life. By the close of the Colonial Period, as indicated by its great expansion of the curriculum following the Revolution, the civic aim was strongly asserting itself and the curriculum was tending strongly in the direction of the wider interests of life. New subjects, such as geography, history, and grammar, were coming into the field and the readers contained a wider range of material. In the process of expansion and change, the schools tended to swing away from the former religious materials which once constituted the backbone of the course of study. Textbooks of a secular nature were so rapidly replacing the Bible as a reading book that in some quarters protests were being registered that the Scriptures had been eliminated from the public schools as a serious subject for study and consideration.³²

By the beginning of the nineteenth century the church control of the public schools was pretty largely breaking down. The States were determined that they should control education and that the course of study should be secular. This does not mean that the States took a position hostile to religion, but it does mean that religion was not to be taught, as such, in the schools. The States, in other words, took the Constitution seriously. They conceived it to be their duty to let other agencies provide the religious instruction while they emphasized the secular. Having had their task assigned to them by the Constitution, they entered upon that course.

It would not be correct to suggest that the battle for free, tax-supported, State-controlled schools was won by the beginning of the nineteenth century, and that the secularization of the American public school system was a fact. Rather, at the beginning of

³² Pray, Lewis G., *History of Sunday Schools and of Religious Education*, p. 198. Pray cites an instance of protest against the neglect of the biblical instruction in the schools. The occasion was the ordination of the Rev. Joseph Tuckerman. The Rev. Thomas Thatcher, of Dedham, Massachusetts, declared that "the reading of the Scriptures in schools is either wholly neglected or reduced to an inferior and disgusting part of puerile duty."

the century, only the first important steps in that direction were taken; the complete separation of church and state in American education was not achieved until about 1850. However, early in the century the States defined their function as to curriculum material, and in the next half century the schools of America began to emerge as free, tax-supported, State-controlled and secular. The church, on the other hand, was left with the task of administering the religious course of study.

CHAPTER II

RELIGIOUS SURVIVALS IN SCHOOLS OF THE EARLY
NATIONAL PERIOD

DESPITE the trend away from the formal religious training in education, indicated in the opening chapter, the secularization of American education was in no sense complete by the beginning of the National Period. It is, therefore, the purpose of the present chapter to consider briefly the persistence of the religious element in the public elementary schools, and especially in those schools founded and promoted by philanthropic agencies. These latter schools played a large part in the development of American education throughout the first three or four decades of the National Period.

CAUSES OF THE PERSISTENCE OF BIBLICAL AND
OTHER RELIGIOUS MATERIALS

As secular subjects were introduced into the curriculum of public education, the Bible became less and less prominent.¹ However, certain factors were at work in the development of the American school which militated against a quick and uniform elimination of the religious element from the curriculum.

First, tradition, always a powerful deterrent to progress along any line, asserted itself and worked toward the retention of the religious emphasis in the schools. Second, it must be remembered that during the first two or three decades of the National Period, education was not so uniformly controlled by the state as now.² When courses of study were dropped from the schools in one section of the country, it did not necessarily mean that they were simultaneously dropped in all sections of the country. Third, because of the natural conservatism of the rural com-

¹ Cubberly, Ellwood P., *Public Education in the United States*, p. 174.

² Graves, Frank P., *Student's History of Education*, p. 251.

munities, changes in the curriculum of rural schools were less rapid than in the curriculum of city schools.

Fourth, in the early part of the National Period, such organizations as the Lancastrian and Infant School Societies and the Free School Society of New York promoted distinct types of curricula among which there was no correlation. These societies, being on the whole philanthropic in nature, sought to aid the community and the nation through a program of education which aimed to touch the moral and spiritual springs of life as well as the intellectual. In fact, they grew out of the general background of philanthropic education which traditionally had stressed moral and religious materials along with the rudiments of knowledge. Therefore, it is not to be expected that the moral and religious materials would be excluded from the curricula of the schools promoted and controlled by such organizations.

These four factors made it inevitable that vestiges of the biblical and other religious materials should be found in American elementary education during the latter part of the eighteenth and the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

PERSISTENCE OF RELIGIOUS MATERIALS IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

We shall note at this point some of the evidences that religious material had a place in the curriculum of the elementary schools.

Barnard's investigation. One of the most fruitful sources of information concerning the early development of American education is a study made by Henry Barnard while he was serving as United States Commissioner of Education. In 1863 Mr. Barnard sent out a questionnaire to prominent lawyers, jurists, ministers, and teachers, asking them to give a faithful account of buildings, teaching, discipline, and courses of study of the schools of their boyhood.³ The replies to this questionnaire cover the period from the American Revolution to the year 1800, and, since they were received from individuals of position and prominence, it would seem that we are justified in placing considerable confidence in the validity of the statements contained therein.

³ Barnard, Henry, *American Journal of Education*, vol. xiii, pp. 124-144; 737-752.

At any rate, the returns may be regarded as valuable because of the fact that there is such general agreement in their statements.

Noah Webster in his reply to Mr. Barnard says that about the time of the Revolution the books used in the schools were chiefly or wholly, Dillworth's speller, the Psalter, the Testament, and the Bible. He says, further, that there were no regular reading books before the publication of the "Third Part" of his *Institute* in 1785.⁴ This means, of course, that biblical material was the reading material even after the Revolution. The Rev. Heman Humphrey says in his reply that in 1800 the branches taught were reading, writing, and spelling, and that the school-books were the Bible and Webster's *American Spelling Book*. This is evidence that the Bible still had a place in the schools as a reading book as late as 1800.⁵

The Hon. Joseph T. Buckingham, in describing schools about the close of the eighteenth century, gives specific information as to his experience in the schools of Windham, Connecticut, which he began to attend in 1783. "The upper class was formed entirely of females such as could read the Bible. The lower classes read in spelling books and in the *New England Primer*. On Monday morning, the first class was required to repeat the text or texts used by the minister on the preceding Sunday, stating the book, chapter, and verse in the Bible where they could be found."⁶ He says that he learned by heart all of the reading lessons in the *Primer* and much of the *Westminster Catechism*, which was taught as the closing exercise each Saturday. Buckingham further states that the Bible was always read by the first class in the morning, and generally in the afternoon before closing. "There were not to my knowledge any reading books proper, but the Bible, till Webster's *Third Book*, so called, came out about 1793 or 1794." Near the close of the letter he states that a new edition of Webster's speller furnished some new materials for reading, selections from the New Testament, a chapter of

⁴ Webster, Noah, Letter to Henry Barnard, *American Journal of Education*, vol. xiii, p. 125.

⁵ Humphrey, Heman, Letter to Henry Barnard, *ibid.*, p. 125.

⁶ Buckingham, Joseph T., Letter to Henry Barnard, *ibid.*, vol. xiii, pp. 129-132. The letter is a description of schools at the close of the eighteenth century.

Proverbs, a set of tables, etc., but that none of these operated to the exclusion of the Bible.

In a letter written to Henry Barnard by a man named Salem Town there is a description of the rural schools of Belchertown, Massachusetts, in the years immediately following the Revolutionary War. He says that the pupils progressed from Dillworth's speller immediately to the Psalter. "There was no intermediate book of easy lessons. The Psalter in our school was the only reader used with the exception of some few lessons in the *Primer* and Dillworth's speller. By 1800, however, there was a variety of readers."⁷ Mr. Town also refers to the secular readers previously mentioned in Chapter I of the present study (pages 28-31). The readers published in America around 1800 breathed a spirit of freedom and liberty of a tone and quality different from that of the reading material before the Revolution.

Reports from other sections of the country tell the same story. William Darlington's reply, for example, describes the schools of West Chester, Pennsylvania, during the interim between the Revolution and the adoption of the federal Constitution. He reports that in West Chester and in the schools of southeastern Pennsylvania Dillworth's speller, the *School Master's Assistant* for ciphering, and the Bible for reading classes were used.⁸ We have no reason to believe that there was any sudden change in the curriculum of the schools at the adoption of the federal Constitution, and are reasonably safe in concluding that the Bible was the chief reading book until the new secular readers came into general use near the close of the eighteenth century.

Other religious vestiges. In the year 1800 the city of Providence, Rhode Island, adopted a course of study and textbooks, including the Bible, but by 1820 the Bible seems to have dropped out of the schools in Providence.⁹ In 1805 the Free School Society was formed in New York City. In 1806 this organization opened its first school and during the next quarter of a cen-

⁷ Town, Salem, Letter to Henry Barnard, *American Journal of Education*, vol. xiii, p. 737.

⁸ *American Journal of Education*, vol. xiii, pp. 742-743.

⁹ Cubberly, Ellwood P., *Public Education in the United States*, p. 224.

ture the number of the schools promoted by this society rapidly increased. An examination of their curricula shows that reading, writing, "numbers," and religion were taught and that the Bible was one of the reading books.¹⁰ The *New England Primer* was used in the Boston Dame Schools as late as 1806, and in the rural districts surrounding Boston much later.

Although this chapter deals primarily with the religious character of the curriculum of elementary education following the Revolution and the early part of the National Period, it may be noted, in passing, that the Boston English High School taught courses in moral philosophy, natural theology, and the evidences of Christianity until after the middle of the nineteenth century.¹¹ The Boston High School for Girls opened in 1826, with moral philosophy and natural theology a part of the school curriculum.

THE STATUS OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

During the eighteenth and the early part of the nineteenth centuries education had not been generally recognized as the proper function and duty of the State. A brief review of educational attempts and progress in three typical States will be given here—Virginia, New York, and Massachusetts.

As previously shown (Chapter I), in Virginia the better class of people did not patronize public and charity schools but provided tutors and private schools for the education of their children. In 1818 Virginia, by an act of the Legislature, made its first general provision for public elementary education by furnishing the counties with school funds. In 1846 Virginia passed a law which established school districts, county commissions, and district trustees. But, unfortunately, since compliance with the State law was optional with the counties, Virginia could not be said to possess a State system of education until after the Civil War. Graves says that the movement toward common schools in Virginia was typical of the South.¹²

New York, which may be considered as typical of the middle

¹⁰ Cubberly, Ellwood P., *ibid.*, p. 224.

¹¹ Dexter, Edwin Grant, *History of Education in the United States*, p. 175.

¹² Graves, Frank P., *Student's History of Education*, p. 256.

group of States, in 1795 passed a law to appropriate money to encourage and maintain schools in the cities and towns. This law, however, was discontinued after five years for lack of adequate funds, since there was a feeling in the State that some philanthropic or religious society should provide children with elementary education. This very likely was a hang-over from the parish school idea of the Colonial Period. The public-school system of New York seems to have had much opposition in the early years of its existence, and not until 1849 did the State provide for a system of free schools that brought the opportunities of education to all children.¹³

Turning now to the New England States, we find that the development of public education in Massachusetts is typical of that group. The Massachusetts law of 1789 legalized the district system (towns divided into school districts) and authorized towns of fifty families to support an English school for at least six months of the year. In such a school reading, writing, arithmetic, orthography, the English language, and decent behavior were to be taught. Dexter says that although the law was on the statute books there was little progress in the schools.¹⁴ In 1826 the State provided for the election of school committees by the several towns. It was the task of such committees to license the teachers and to inspect the schools, reporting the results of their inspection to the governor of the State. This ruling made possible a more adequate administration of the law of 1789, though lack of funds proved a serious handicap until 1834, when a permanent school fund was established. It was not until 1837 that Massachusetts provided for a State Board of Education, with Horace Mann as the first secretary of that board. He, perhaps more than any other man, was responsible for the influences that culminated in the revival of education throughout New England and indirectly throughout the entire country.

This brief review of the background reveals the fact that during the first three or four decades of the National Period American public education was in a rather chaotic condition. The States

¹³ Graves, Frank P., *Student's History of Education*, p. 261.

¹⁴ Dexter, Edwin Grant, *History of Education in the United States*, p. 82.

were working toward the ideal of giving all children a chance to receive at least an elementary education, but that ideal was but poorly realized during the first forty or fifty years of our national life. Financial support was limited, teachers poorly trained, courses of study formal; and in many localities there were no schools at all.¹⁵

SOCIETIES FOR THE PROMOTION OF EDUCATION

Since, in the early part of the nineteenth century, education as a proper function and duty of the State was not supported enthusiastically, other provision was needed for the training of children.

Attempts were made here and there, by kindly and benevolent individuals, to provide for the education of the children of indigent parents through so-called charity or philanthropic schools. Whenever these attempts proved successful, usually a society was formed to promote the experiment on a broader scale. These organizations for the most part had their origin in Europe, but in almost every case they spread to the new world, where they played a part in American education. Thus throughout the period when public education might well be described as transitional and formative there was need for schools, promoted by societies, which would provide educational opportunities particularly for the children of the poor. Had it not been for these organizations, great numbers of children throughout the first twenty-five or thirty years of our national life would have received no education. We shall now give brief consideration to some of the representative schools fostered by philanthropic societies.

The free schools of New York City. First we shall give consideration to the Free School Society of New York, which attempted to supply children with an elementary education.

(1) *Origin of the Society.* Since the charity schools for the most part were attached to the various sects, and did not embrace children of different faiths, since not all the denominations possessed schools of their own, and since the children most in need of instruction were obviously excluded by the fact that their parents

¹⁵ Boone, Richard G., *Education in the United States*, chap. VI.

did not belong to any communion, certain interested and benevolent people petitioned the State Legislature, and in response that body on April 9, 1805, passed a law entitled "An act to incorporate the Society instituted in the City of New York for the establishment of a free school, for the education of poor children, who do not belong to, or are not provided for by any religious society."¹⁶

(2) *Provision for religious instruction.* The Board of Trustees of the Free School Society took particular pains to avoid the introduction of sectarianism into the schools. From the commencement of the institution they had directed that the Holy Scriptures should be read daily in the schools; and it was thought that the tender minds of the children could not fail to be impressed with the sublime precepts and the beautiful morality of this excellent volume.¹⁷

The Board of Trustees, however, did not stop with the reading of the Scriptures to the children. They made provision that on Tuesday afternoon of each week the regular classes should be suspended and that the time be devoted entirely to the religious instruction of the children. The teaching of religion, however, was delegated to an association of more than fifty women, who belonged to the different religious denominations in the city, and who volunteered their services for this work. Accordingly, on each Tuesday they met at the schools to examine the children in their respective catechisms. The parents or guardians determined the denomination in whose doctrines they desired their children to be taught. In addition to this the trustees authorized that the children should assemble at their respective schools on the morning of the Sabbath and be escorted to a place of worship.

The Free School Society continued to supervise the moral and religious habits of the pupils, even after the Tuesday afternoon exercises in the catechism were discontinued. In some of the schools the practice of reading from the Scriptures at the opening of the day's session was continued till the close of the society.

¹⁶ Clinton, De Witt, *An Address delivered to the trustees and patrons of the Free School Society*, p. 8, 1809. Governor De Witt Clinton was president of said society.

¹⁷ *An Account of the Free School Society of New York*, published by Collens and Company, 1814, p. 16.

The thirty-third annual report (1838) reports that the schools were uniformly opened with the reading of Scriptures, and the classbooks were such as recognized and enforced the great and generally acknowledged principles of Christianity. In the year 1830 the Board of Trustees approved and published a manual for the Primary Department. The section dealing with the religious exercises recommended for the use of teachers at the opening of the school day deserves attention. W. O. Bourne, in his history of these schools, points out that in the morning the teacher gave, first of all, a salutation to the school, next, a prayer of dependence upon God, and then proceeded with the religious exercises.¹⁸ An extract from the religious exercises will illustrate their form and content.

Teacher. How should we feel toward our Heavenly Father for these mercies?

Answer. Very thankful.

T. What example have we for this in the Holy Scripture?

A. Psalm C, 4, 5: "Be thankful unto him, and bless his name, for the Lord is good, His mercy endureth to all generations."

T. Children, who is good?

A. The Lord is good.

T. To whom should we be thankful?

A. Be thankful unto Him.

T. Whose name should we bless?

A. Bless His name.

T. What is said in this Psalm of God's mercy?

A. His mercy is everlasting.

T. What is said of God's truth?

A. His truth endureth to all generations.

T. What is God's truth?

A. His holy laws.

T. Psalm XXXIV, ii: "Come, ye children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord." My dear children, tell me, who has watched over you, and preserved your lives throughout the past night?

A. Psalm III, 5: "I laid me down and slept, I waked, for the Lord sustained me."

T. Does God always see you?

A. Proverbs XV, 3: "The eyes of the Lord are in every place."

T. Does God know your very thoughts?

A. Psalm CXXXIX, 1, 2: "O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my down sitting and mine uprising; thou understandest my thoughts afar off."

T. Does God know all you do?

¹⁸ Bourne, William Orland, *History of the Public School Society of the City of New York*, p. 642.

- A. Psalm CXXXIX, 3: "Thou compassed my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways."
 T. Does God hear all you say?
 A. Psalm CXXXIX, 4: "For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether."¹⁹

Other questions deal with God's requirement that the young serve him, and the uncertainty of life. The questions and answers were followed by the repetition of the Lord's Prayer and the singing or recitation of a hymn thought suitable for children.

The opening exercises for the youngest children consisted of questions and answers centering around such concepts as serving God while young, obedience to parents, obedience to teachers, lying, stealing, swearing, and the fact that God sees and hears all we do and say. When the questions were concluded, the children sang a hymn from the collection of Doctor Watts.

These religious exercises reveal at least the following facts: The Scripture passages many times were beyond the comprehension of the children. There was an extreme emphasis upon God seeing and hearing all we do and say. It is likely that children would come to fear God rather than love him. Obedience and service were placed upon a basis of duty rather than an opportunity. The hymns represented the same concepts found in the questions, namely, fear, blind obedience, and punishments for wrongdoing.

With all their mistakes, the originators of the Free School Society and those who continued it were men of earnest convictions, who felt and attempted to discharge a moral and religious responsibility toward the children of their city.

The Lancastrian Schools. The Lancastrian schools represent another European transplantation.²⁰ They originally grew out of the English philanthropic movement in education, which sought to provide for the education of the poor and neglected children. This system soon spread to America, beginning as early as 1806. Meeting with popularity, the system spread rapidly throughout the Middle States, Massachusetts, Con-

¹⁹ Bourne, William Orland, *History of the Public School Society of the City of New York*, pp. 642-643.

²⁰ Further accounts of Lancastrian schools may be found in Cubberly, Ellwood P., *Public Education in the United States*, pp. 90, 92, 96, 223.

necticut, and in some of the Southern States. It found a ready response in nearly all of the large cities of America as far south as Atlanta, Georgia, and as far west as Cincinnati, Ohio. The movement seems to have been especially strong in the Middle States from about 1806 to 1830. In 1807 we find a legislative declaration in favor of the Lancastrian system. The preamble of this act is as follows: "*Whereas*, The trustees of the Society for establishing a free school in the City of New York, for the education of such poor children, . . . have, by their memorial, solicited the aid of the Legislature; and whereas their plan of extending the benefits of education to poor children, and the excellent mode of instruction adopted by them, are highly deserving of the encouragement of government." Governor DeWitt Clinton quotes this preamble in an address and says that the system was that of Lancaster.²¹ The Lancastrian school, being a charitable institution, made a strong appeal to the Middle States, both because the State systems were slow to develop and because this was the type of school to which the people of the Middle States had been accustomed.

The Lancastrian schools in America as well as in England offered biblical and other religious materials in their curriculum, the source of material being the Bible and the catechism.²² Figures are not available as to the number of children attending these schools, but they seem to have gained great popularity in America, especially in all of the Atlantic sections. Since the Lancastrian schools were to be found virtually throughout the United States, it is safe to assume that many children during the first quarter of the nineteenth century were in attendance at a school which included religious materials in the curriculum, and which conducted religious exercises.

The Infant Schools. In a study of religious continuations in elementary education some attention must be given to the

²¹ Clinton, De Witt, *An Address Delivered before the Free School Society of New York*, p. 12.

²² Clinton, De Witt, *ibid.* In England these schools were very effective in teaching reading and the fundamentals of religion. Cubberly, *Public Education in the United States*, p. 90. In 1818 Lancaster came to America to organize this type of school. *Ibid.*, p. 223, Cubberly says that the Lancastrian schools were organized to give instruction in spelling, reading, writing, arithmetic, English, Grammar, geography, religion.

In my judgment, after consulting the authorities treating of this type of education we are safe in concluding that the Bible and the catechism were an important part of the curriculum.

"Infant Schools," another product of the philanthropic spirit.

This institution had its origin in France, but in 1824 we find the movement taking root in England, where the Bible was used as one of the books of instruction. Even the child of six was expected to know the chief facts of the New Testament. Infant Schools found their way into the United States during the first quarter of the nineteenth century but, for the most part, never became an integral part of the public-school systems which were developing. These schools were quite prominent in Boston, New York City, New York State, Pennsylvania, and in parts of Connecticut and Maryland. They were philanthropic in nature and were fostered by the leading men of the communities in which they were established.

The course of study began with the alphabet, and as soon as it was mastered, easy reading material was given until the pupils could be promoted to the New Testament. The New Testament, as reading material, was stressed more than any other. The reason for this is clear when one notes that the Infant School is another product of that philanthropic movement in education which sought to direct morals and character as well as the intellectual life of the pupils. The objective sought for in the curriculum is well expressed in these words: "The promoters of Infant Schools want to touch the heart, they want to operate upon the will and the affections as well as the understanding and its thoughts; they want to make good men, rather than learned men—men of wisdom rather than men of knowledge."²³

Young in this *Infant's School Manual* lays stress upon the value of such schools for the formation of moral character. Manners were attended to, obedience was stressed and was to be taught by actual practice, truth was to be inculcated, and gentleness encouraged by removing the causes for the outbreaks of temper. Furthermore, in the moral lessons, generosity was to be encouraged, ridicule guarded against, and pride was to be avoided by getting the pupils to learn for the sake of learning rather than by attempting to get the better of their fellows. Tyranny and

²³ *Infant School in Quaker Street, Spitalfields*, p. 13.

exclusiveness were to be offset by rules securing the freedom of all. Cruelty to animals and destructiveness of all kinds were to be discouraged.

In order to appreciate better the religious and moral teaching of the Infant Schools we shall consider extracts from a manual dealing with the subject.

In 1828 Shirley and Hyde, of Portland, Maine, printed a book called *Infant Education*. Chapter IX contains a plan for teaching the youngest children by the aid of pictures. To use the language of the book: "To give the children general information, it has been found necessary to have resource to pictures of natural history, such as birds, beasts, flowers, insects, all of which tend to show the glory of God. . . . The first thing that attracts the child's attention even in the cradle is a light; and we may venture to say, the next thing that attracts his attention are bright colors; it is for this reason, that pictures of Scripture history have been selected, such as Joseph and his brethren, Christ raising Lazarus from the dead, The Nativity, Flight into Egypt, Christ disputing with doctors, Christ baptised by John."²⁴

Taking, for example, Joseph and his brethren, the following method of presentation is used: The picture is placed on the wall, and as one class of the children stand before it the master repeats the following passages, "And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it to his brethren; and they hated him yet the more. And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, the dream which I have dreamed; for behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and lo! my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about and made obeisance to my sheaf."

The teacher then pointed to the picture and asked the following questions, or such others as he might think proper:

Q. What is this?

A. Joseph's first dream.

Q. What is a dream?

A. When you dream you see things during the time of sleep.

²⁴ *Infant Education*, pp. 34 and 36.

Q. Did any of you ever dream anything?

Q. What did Joseph dream about first?

A. He dreamed that his brother's sheaf made obeisance to his sheaf.

Q. What is a sheaf?

A. A bundle of corn.

Q. What do you understand by making obeisance?

A. Bending your body, which we call making a bow.

Q. What is binding sheaves?

A. To bind them, which is done with a band of twisted straw.

Q. How many brothers had Joseph?

A. Eleven.

Q. What was Joseph's father's name?

A. Jacob, who is sometimes called Israel.²⁵

In connection with the picture of "The Nativity" a definite spiritual lesson is drawn. The "inn" is described as a place where travelers lodge. Then the children are told that we are all travelers on the roadway of life, though some are on the good road and some on the bad road. The good road leads to heaven and the bad road leads to eternal misery. The children are instructed that through the exercise of prayer and obedience to the Commandments they may travel in the good road. The lesson drawn is entirely foreign to the experiences of young children, but in this respect it is quite characteristic of an age that expected children to be capable of the experiences of adults.

It is perfectly clear from the manuals prepared for teachers that moral and religious themes were taught in the Infant Schools, and, judging from the manual here referred to, they made up a fair proportion of the course of study. Since these schools were quite widespread in the United States,²⁶ we have good reason to assume that this agency did a great deal to provide moral and religious instruction through the use of biblical and moral materials during the second quarter of the nineteenth century.

There is another institution which grew up out of the general philanthropic spirit of the eighteenth century that was also promoted by societies—the Sunday school. However, since this institution so far outreaches the others in significance, we shall need to devote a chapter to its origin in England and its adoption

²⁵ *Infant Education*, p. 37.

²⁶ Cubberly, Ellwood P., *Public Education in the United States*, pp. 96–100.

in America and the remaining chapters of this study to a consideration of its curriculum.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter it was pointed out that the process of secularization in the elementary schools of America which began around 1750 did not become an accomplished fact until almost the middle of the nineteenth century. The tendency toward secularization began very gradually. The spellers following 1750 were somewhat similar to the *New England Primer* in the reading sections, except for the introduction of a little more secular material. Shortly after the Revolution, there occurred an expansion of the curriculum caused both by the spirit of the age and the new school books written by American authors. This means that less and less time was being devoted to biblical and other religious materials. However, it is quite evident, in the light of the facts which have been presented, that in the forming of the new nation the Bible did not lose its place immediately as one of the reading books in the public schools. The replies to the questionnaire sent out by Henry Barnard show that the Bible as reading material passed very gradually out of the elementary schools.

During the first three or four decades of the National Period, when American public education was in its period of transition, the so-called charity or philanthropic schools played a large rôle. In these institutions the objective of education was a double one. Their founders possessed strong religious convictions, and desired not only to give children the tools of knowledge for the sake of their own usefulness and future independence but also to nourish the moral and religious nature of the children through religious instruction. They considered the latter a means of improving children's manners and morals. In other words, these men aimed at the reformation of society through a training that neglected neither the intellectual nor the religious side of life. In the philanthropic schools, therefore, the religious element tended to be emphasized more than in the public schools that were developing throughout the States. Thus in these educational institutions, because of the presence of a double

motive, we have a hold-over, so to speak, of religious materials and exercises. Since these schools were so widespread, partially supplying a very great need until the state systems began to function, it is only fair to conclude that a large proportion of the American children received through these institutions at least a limited religious instruction along with the tools of secular learning.

The methods employed in these schools were only slightly improved over the methods of the Colonial Period, except in the case of the Infant Schools, where better methods were introduced.²⁷ On the whole, the courses of study were formal and the methods of teaching were equally formal. The free initiative of the pupil was not stressed and his problems were not considered. The courses of study were material-centered and not child-centered, which meant that more emphasis was placed upon the child's mastering the subject in memoriter fashion than upon his adapting the material to the particular needs and interests of his life. Learning, instead of being made a system of discovery accompanied by the thrill of discovery and application, was made mechanical, formal, and memoriter to the extreme. There was some attempt at adaptation of the material, but the results were poor. For example, in the catechisms, readers, and spellers, there was an attempt to simplify the words and phrases, but for the most part the concepts were far advanced, and, in the nature of the case, could not be simplified.

One should not disparage unduly the efforts of these reformers, for deep-lying objectives and long-used and time-honored methods are not easily shaken loose. We ought also to note that earnest men interested in the cause of education were seeking for better methods, and textbook writers were busy trying to place better materials in the hands of the pupils.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

At the close of the book will be found a comprehensive bibliography divided into original and secondary sources. At conve-

²⁷ Graves, Frank P., *Student's History of Education*, pp. 243 and 248.

nient intervals are given brief lists of suggested readings for the various periods and subjects.

GENERAL REFERENCES

First are given a few standard studies which the reader may consult for more detailed information about the general subjects of religion and education in America during both the Colonial and National Periods.

Alexander, A. B., *The Shaping Forces of Modern Religious Thought*.

Bacon, Leonard Woolsey, *History of American Christianity*.

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CHAPTER III

ORIGIN OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

ROBERT RAIKES is universally known as the founder of the Sunday school. In order to understand the work that he did, it is necessary to know something of the predecessors of the Sunday school as well as the environment out of which the new movement grew.

PREDECESSORS OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL IN ENGLAND

Religious instruction on Sunday did not begin with the work of Robert Raikes, but it is the type of school sponsored by him which, with modifications, has come down into our own time as one of the powerful agencies of religious instruction.

Jewish religious instruction. In the Jewish synagogue the instruction was not greatly unlike that of the Raikes schools, for in the synagogue school reading, writing, and simple ciphering were taught. The reading was from the Old Testament, particularly from the "Law." The primary purpose of the Jewish school was to provide religious instruction.

Early Christian schools. The Christian Church which developed out of the historic Jewish background adopted the teaching method from the very first, as a productive means of recruiting and nurturing new members. The early Christian Church was an institution for both worship and teaching. The churches of the early Christian era gave religious instruction on the Sabbath, particularly to those preparing for membership and for the nurture of the new members, young and old. The instruction of catechumens (those preparing for church membership) was a basic function of the early church.¹

Roman Catholic instruction. An important and authoritative catechism of the Roman Catholic Church was produced by the

¹ Schaff, Herzog, *Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, vol. ii, p. 449.

Council of Trent in 1566, the work of Cardinal Borromeo, Archbishop of Milan. This Roman cardinal was an ardent advocate of catechetical instruction and was responsible for a synodical decree which directed all curates to assemble the children of each parish for catechetical instruction on Sunday and other fast days. This archbishop himself organized a teaching staff to teach children on Sundays. At his death (1584) it is reported that he left 740 schools, 273 superintendents, 1,726 minor officers, and 40,098 scholars.²

English Sabbath instruction prior to Raikes. As early as 1769 Hannah Ball gathered children in a parish house at Wycombe, near London, and taught them the Bible.³ This school was called a Sabbath school. In 1773 John Marks Moffatt wrote to Mr. Gibbons about his plan of instructing children on Sunday. We may take it for granted that the plan had been under way for some little time and may in all fairness fix the beginning of this school as early as 1772.⁴ Simultaneously with the work of Moffatt, Kinderman in Bohemia in 1773 held a school in his church for the religious instruction of children and it seems to have been a fairly successful enterprise. The attempts before Raikes seem to have been sporadic, and did not spread widely. The schools, except that of Borromeo, were local, isolated attempts here and there, and never assumed the proportions of a movement.

THE PHILANTHROPIC MOVEMENT IN ENGLAND

In order to understand the Sunday-school movement one must know something of the social, economic, and moral conditions out of which it came.

During the eighteenth century the masses of people in England were in a pitiable condition. England had no effective system of schools. The better class provided for the education of their own children, while the masses lived in poverty, squalor, and ignorance. In the midst of such conditions certain philanthropic

² Harris, J. Henry, *Robert Raikes, the Man and His Work*, p. 157. Watson, W. H., *The First Fifty Years of the Sunday School*, p. 5.

³ Monroe, Paul, *A Cyclopedia of Education*, vol. v, p. 453. Power, John C., *Rise and Progress of Sunday Schools*, p. 21.

⁴ Harris, J. Henry, *Robert Raikes, the Man and His Work*, p. 140.

persons undertook to counteract the prevalent illiteracy and irreligion by founding schools for the children of the indigent.⁵ Societies arose in England whose purpose it was to promote schools for such children. They did valiant work in providing fair elementary training in the rudiments of knowledge and in religion. This trend, known in history as the Philanthropic Movement—an outgrowth of the philanthropic spirit—gave rise also to the Sunday school.

THE WORK OF ROBERT RAIKES

A benevolent and philanthropic man by the name of Robert Raikes was much disturbed by the moral and social conditions of the poor people of England.

His plan of social improvement. Recognizing the futility of working only with grown-ups, he conceived the idea of providing instruction in the rudiments of learning and in religion for the poor children of the industries, who had no opportunities for education. Raikes began his Sunday experiment in Gloucester, England, in the year 1780. His aim was to train children in the elements both of knowledge and of religion. He says that the suggestion came to him from a group of miserable little wretches whom he observed one day in the street, where many people employed in the pin factory reside. "I was expressing my concern to one, at their forlorn and neglected state and I was told if I were to pass this way on Sunday, it would shock me, indeed, to see the crowd of children who were spending their sacred day in noise and riot, to the extreme annoyance of all decent people. I determined immediately to make some little effort to remedy this evil."⁶

Since the children came out of poor homes and were compelled to work during the week, Raikes' plan for the reform of the rising generation was to establish schools where poor children might be received on Sunday and taught to read and repeat

⁵ Good short descriptions of the English conditions during the century are to be found in Watson, W. H., *The First Fifty Years of the Sunday School*, chap. ii; Haslett, Samuel B., *The Pedagogical Bible School*, p. 40; Graves, Frank P., *Student's History of Education*, chap. xx, and in McFarland, John F., *The Encyclopedia of Sunday Schools and Religious Education*, vol. iii, p. 1025.

⁶ *Arminian Magazine*, vol. xiii, p. 41, January, 1785.

their catechism, or anything else that might be deemed proper to open their minds to a knowledge of their duty to God, their neighbors, and themselves.

He was assisted in his work by a woman of the neighborhood who pointed out available teachers and a friendly curate in the neighborhood who might be interested in the project. Raikes was thus able to secure four teachers to help him open his school in Sooty Alley in 1780. The school had a forenoon and an afternoon session. The children came from ten until twelve, had recess for an hour, returned to the school at one, read a lesson, and were then conducted to the church. After church they were employed with the catechism until half-past five, when they were dismissed with the injunction to go home without making any noise.⁷ Raikes required the children to have clean hands, clean faces, and well-combed hair to be admitted to the school. After the experiment had made some progress a few clergymen rendered assistance by visiting the Sunday schools which had been organized in other localities, to hear the children say their catechism and to note the general progress of the schools.

Mr. Raikes was much pleased with the actual results of his schools, and in the *Arminian Magazine* of January, 1785, he relates how Mr. Church, a manufacturer of hemp and flax, informed him that the change in the children in his employ could not have been more extraordinary had they been transformed from the shape of wolves and tigers to that of men. Many years after the schools were first organized, Raikes said to Joseph Lancaster, "I can never pass by the spot where the word 'try' came so powerfully into my mind, without lifting up my hands and heart to heaven in gratitude to God for having put such a thought into my mind and heart."⁸

We must not think that the Raikes Sunday school moved along the road of its development without any opposition. The new school had its enemies, particularly on the part of the Church of England, and on the part of those who were not interested in the education of the poor children for fear of the consequences to

⁷ A good account of the founding of the Sunday school can be had from *Robert Raikes, the Man and His Work*, p. 309, edited by J. Henry Harris.

⁸ Watson, W. H., *The First Fifty Years of the Sunday School*, p. 19.

society and industry. But the movement in spite of opposition seemed to have been born at an opportune time, for it spread to Wales, Scotland, and soon to America as well as throughout England.

The friendliness of the Wesleys. The friendliness of the Wesleys gave the movement a great impetus. John Wesley in 1785 gave Raikes an opportunity to write an account of the founding of the Sunday school for the *Arminian Magazine*, which helped to give the new experiment even greater publicity.

John Wesley saw in the Sunday school great possibilities and early espoused the movement. In his *Journal* dated July 18, 1784, he has this significant entry: "Before service I stepped into the Sunday school which contained two hundred and forty children, taught every Sunday by several masters and superintended by curates. So many children in one parish are restrained from open sin and taught a little good manners at least, as well as to read the Bible. I find these schools springing up wherever I go. Perhaps God may have a deeper end therein than men are aware of. Who knows but some of these schools may become nurseries of Christians?"⁹ In 1790 Wesley wrote a letter to one of his preachers, the Rev. Charles Atmore, in which he said:

"I am glad you have set up schools at New Castle. It is one of the best institutions which have been seen in Europe for some centuries. Nothing can prevent the success of this blessed work but the neglect of the instruments. Therefore, be sure to watch them with all care, that they may not grow weary in well-doing."¹⁰

With the help of Robert Raikes, the publicist and propagandist, and with the force of the Wesleyan movement championing its cause, the new types of school embarked upon a fruitful career.

The curriculum of the Raikes Sunday school. The curriculum of the Sunday school consisted of reading, writing, simple figuring, the Bible, and the catechism. As the child had been taught the

⁹ Curnock, Nehemiah, *The Journal of John Wesley*, vol. vii, p. 31, Standard Edition. The date of the founding of this particular school was June, 1784, just one month before Wesley visited it. The school was undenominational and was supported by public subscription.

¹⁰ *Wesley's Works*, vol. xiii, p. 113. Also in the *Journal of John Wesley*, vol. vii, p. 54, Standard Edition by Nehemiah Curnock.

simplest rudiments of reading, the Bible became the chief reading book. The catechism was emphasized in all of the schools.¹¹

The Raikes Sunday school spreads to America. English and continental educational movements have been always rather widely introduced and imitated in America. One needs only to think of the English Grammar School, the Academy, the method of Pestalozzi, the Kindergarten of Froebel, the Monitorial systems of Lancaster and Bell, and the Volk-schule of Germany, championed by Horace Mann, to realize the truth of this statement. We are not surprised that within a half-dozen years after the Raikes school had been organized in England, similar schools were beginning to appear in America. Although it is most difficult, and perhaps impossible, to fix with absolute historical accuracy the beginnings of the Raikes movement in America, there is abundant evidence that religious instruction was given on Sunday in America before Raikes ever conceived the idea of his charity school in England. It may be interesting and worth while, to review very briefly, Sabbath instruction in America up to and including the type of school like that of Raikes.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL IN AMERICA

Sabbath instruction in the United States represents a development. It involves differences not only in curricula but in promotional agencies.

Early attempts at Sunday schools. Paul Monroe, in the *Encyclopedia of Education*, says that there are accounts often hard to verify of the gathering of children on Sunday for religious instruction in churches as far back as 1665 in Roxbury, Massachusetts, and in 1674 in Norwich, Connecticut.¹² John Wesley, while in America, made entries in his journal to the effect that part of the Sabbath was frequently devoted to the classes engaged in a study of the catechism. An entry on Sunday, October 23, 1737, is very specific. "Having ended Fleury's *Manners of the Ancient Christians*, we began to instruct the children in public

¹¹ Trumbull, Henry Clay, *Yale Lectures on the Sunday School*, p. 110.

¹² Monroe, Paul, *A Cyclopedia of Education*, vol. V, p. 453.

as well as in private, in a short paraphrase of our Lord's Sermon on the Mount."¹³

From these entries, coupled with statements by Wesley, previously quoted on page 56, two things are evident: first, Wesley engaged in giving religious instruction on the Sabbath, and, secondly, he did not give the same kind of instruction that was given in these schools established by Raikes in England. If he had known of such schools since his American experiences, he would not have said in August, 1784, "I find these schools springing up wherever I go," and again, "Perhaps God may have a deeper end therein than men are aware of. Who knows but some of these schools may become nurseries of Christians?"¹⁴ A year later we find him commending one of his preachers for founding schools similar to the Raikes schools. Necessarily, then, we must conclude that Wesley's work in Georgia was strictly religious and was not conducted along the lines of a Raikes school.¹⁵

Sunday schools of the Raikes type in America. Coming now to the first Sunday school in America of the Raikes type, there are traces of evidence in favor of possibly two first claimants to having been the first to organize schools similar to Raikes in America. Addie Grace Wardle, in her *History of the Sunday School Movement in the Methodist Episcopal Church*; C. W. Baines, general secretary of the Virginia State Sunday School Association, 1910; and Alfred T. Marks, writing in *The Classmate* for December 8, 1917, all believe that the first Sunday school in America like that of Raikes was organized in Accomack County, Virginia, by William Elliott in the year 1785.¹⁶ Mrs. Wessie B. Nock Eason, a great-great-granddaughter of William Elliott, in a personal letter to the writer, says: "It is a pleasure to answer your questions about the old Sunday school. It was organized by William Elliott at his home in Bradford's Neck, Accomack

¹³ Curnock, Nehemiah, *The Journal of John Wesley*, vol. I, p. 338.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. vii, p. 3.

¹⁵ A good short account of Wesley's work in America may be had from Buckley, J. M., *A History of Methodism in the United States*.

¹⁶ Wardle, Addie Grace, *History of the Sunday School Movement in the Methodist Episcopal Church*, pp. 46-47.

Baines, C. W., *First American Sunday School*, Historical Bulletin No. 1, of the Virginia State Sunday School Association, 1910.

Marks, Alfred T., "The First Sunday School in America," *The Classmate*, December 8, 1917, p. 386.

County, Virginia, in 1785 for the purpose of teaching his own children how to read the Bible, which was the only textbook."¹⁷

Elliott was an immigrant from England shipwrecked on the Virginia coast. Considering his escape from the sea as providential, he decided to remain in the State near the place where he was saved from the sea. About 1772 he became a convert to Christianity and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. Mr. Elliott had many white boys in his employ as well as many colored slaves and servants on his estate. Being a man of fine philanthropic spirit, he established a Sunday school in his own home in the year 1785 (according to the authorities just cited). Alfred T. Marks, though he recognizes the fact that certain authorities give the date of the first Sunday school in America as 1786, states that after an exhaustive investigation of the manuscripts and original records, he is of the opinion that the school founded by Elliott antedated all others of its kind in America.¹⁸ At any rate, this is the earliest Sunday school in America that has had an unbroken history up to the present.¹⁹

The course of study in the early Elliott school consisted of teaching the members to read, as well as permitting them to hear the Scriptures read. After sufficient advancement had been made, the study of the catechism was introduced, and later Bible readings by the class members with explanation and comment by the teacher. This course of study, with some modifications, continued until 1873, when the *International Uniform Lessons* were introduced.

If it is true that this school was organized in 1785, then probably the second school in America like that of Raikes was established by Bishop Asbury in the home of Thomas Crenshaw, also a Virginian. In the first annual Report of the Methodist Sunday School Union reprinted in the Annual Report of the same Sunday School Union for the year 1847, it is pointed out that a Sabbath school was taught in the home of Thomas Crenshaw in the year 1786. C. W. Baines says that Bishop Asbury organized a Sun-

¹⁷ Eason, Mrs. Wessie B. Nock, personal letter to the writer, October 26, 1924.

¹⁸ Marks, Alfred T., *The Classmate*, December 8, 1917, p. 386.

¹⁹ Baines, C. W., *First American Sunday School*, Historical Bulletin No. 1, of the Virginia State Sunday School Association, 1910.

day school in Hanover County, Virginia, in the home of Thomas Crenshaw in the year 1786, the year after the Elliott school was organized.²⁰

Church influences in the early Sunday schools. The Methodist Conference held at Charleston, South Carolina, took definite action on Wednesday, February 17, 1790, to organize and promote Sunday schools. Bishop Asbury records in his *Journal*: "Our Conference resolved on establishing Sunday schools for poor children, white and black."²¹ The minutes on this point are as follows:

What can be done in order to instruct poor children (white and black) to read?

Let us labor, as the heart and soul of one man, to establish Sunday schools, in or near the place of public worship. Let persons be appointed by the bishops, elders, deacons, or preachers to teach (*gratis*) all that will attend, and have a capacity to learn; from six o'clock in the morning till ten; and from two o'clock in the afternoon till six, where it does not interfere with public worship. The council shall compile a proper school book to teach them learning and piety.²²

These schools were to be essentially like those of Robert Raikes, since they were established chiefly for the instruction of children who did not have the advantage of the day school. Nathan Bangs is authority for a statement that these schools were not very well attended. The teachers soon grew discouraged and the whole enterprise was soon abandoned.²³

SUNDAY SCHOOLS IN AMERICA PROMOTED BY SOCIETIES OUTSIDE OF THE CHURCH

Following close on the English movement, and stimulated by it, Sunday schools after the type of Raikes began to grow up in this country at the very beginning of the National Period. It needs to be remembered that the first Sunday schools springing up in America were not, in general, under the administration of the church any more than they were in England.²⁴ They were

²⁰ Baines, C. W. *First American Sunday School*, Historical Bulletin, No. 1, of the Virginia State Sunday School Association.

²¹ *The Journal of Asbury*, vol. ii, p. 65.

²² *Minutes of the Methodist Conferences, Annually held in America from 1773 to 1794 inclusive*, p. 147.

²³ Bangs, Nathan, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, vol. i, p. 309.

²⁴ Edwin Wilbur Rice says that when the New York Sunday and Adult School Union was organized in 1817, it was clearly a movement exclusively by the laymen (*The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union*, p. 61).

in nearly all cases promoted by Christian men but were administered independently of the church organizations. It is true that such a school might be organized by such men as Bishop Asbury in a home which was really one of his preaching stations, and be authorized by the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1790, but for the most part the Sunday school was an institution independent of the church. This is clearly implied in the *Albion Catechism* by the author, Joseph Sutcliffe. He says: "It reflects considerable luster on the piety of the present age that so many good men, and men of education and fortune, have condescended to instruct neglected children on the Sabbath day. The parents of these children, struggling with poverty, are obliged to employ them in manufactories from the earliest period of their capacity to labor, and consequently they have no opportunity to receive instruction except on that day. These united and gratuitous efforts to rescue them from ignorance, to make them industrious by principle, and introduce them to an early acquaintance with the doctrine and duties of their religion, are among the most beneficial and laudable institutions of our country."²⁵ There is no hint here that the churches were promoting, administering, or supervising this enterprise as their particular province. Edwin Wilbur Rice points out that the new scheme was rejected by the churches but accepted by laymen as a philanthropic movement for the moral and religious training of all classes of children. "It thus became largely a movement sustained by laymen, and upon a union basis, not opposed to, though not a part of, the organized work of the local church."²⁶

With the desire for Sunday schools taking hold in America there arose organizations to promote them. In fact, during the last decade of the eighteenth century and the first quarter of the nineteenth, Sunday-schools were organized and promoted largely through societies and unions. The first organization of this kind had its origin in Philadelphia in the year 1790 and was known as the First Day or Sunday School Society, and during the first ten years of its existence is said to have taught 2,127 pupils.²⁷ In

²⁵ Sutcliffe, Joseph, *The Albion Catechism*, p. 5.

²⁶ Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union*, p. 44.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

1804 the Union Society was organized to provide for the education of the poor female children of Philadelphia. In 1809 a systematic Sunday-school movement was provided for in Pittsburgh by the organization of the Pittsburgh Sunday School Union. Other large cities such as Boston, New York, Albany, Utica, Hartford, Baltimore, and Charleston soon followed with similar Unions.

Of the early societies promoting Sunday schools the Adult and Sunday School Union of New York, organized in 1817, is one of the most outstanding. By the end of its seventh year of existence it enrolled over 720 schools, associations or societies, located in seventeen different States, with over 55,000 members connected with its work through auxiliaries. In the year 1823-1824 it enrolled 723 schools, 7,300 teachers, and 49,619 pupils.²⁸

The curriculum of the Sunday school. Both in England and America the first Sunday schools taught both secular and moral and religious subjects. This was to be expected, since in both countries they were charity schools providing an education for the children of the poor who would not be reached by other schools. It was necessary, in the light of their background in both countries, that they should serve a double purpose, instructing children in the rudiments of knowledge, and inculcating in them the elements of morals and religion. Reading, writing, simple figuring, the catechism, and the Bible constituted the curriculum. A few typical instances of the curriculum in the first school will be noted.

Baines states that in the school of William Elliott the course of study consisted of learning to read the Scriptures, studying the catechism, and more advanced Bible reading by those who had mastered the catechism. The Bible readings were accompanied by explanation and comment by the teacher.²⁹ It is probable that the school organized by Bishop Asbury in the home of Thomas Crenshaw resembled Mr. Elliott's school in the course of study.

²⁸ Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union*, p. 66.

²⁹ Baines, C. W., *The First American Sunday School*, Historical Bulletin No. 1, of the Virginia State Sunday School Association, p. 7.

Edwin W. Rice, in his book *The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union*, points out that the early Sunday schools after the Raikes plan had four grades: "Infant," where the alphabet and words of one syllable were mastered; "Elementary," where the children could spell out words of two and three syllables; "Scripture," where the children were able to read from the Scriptures; and "Senior," where the pupils read easily from both the Old and New Testaments. The alphabet was placed on cards for the convenience of the children. A simple spelling book was prepared for the Sunday school which contained reading lessons taken from the Scriptures. In the spelling lesson for that corresponding session the words were taken from the same portion of Scriptures as were the reading selections. In all the grades the teachers were expected to devote a portion of each session to specific religious instruction. In the early Sunday school there was a union of the secular learning with religious instruction.

The First Day or Sunday School Society of Philadelphia adopted a constitution in 1790 specifying that the schools under its supervision should teach children from the Bible and from such other moral and religious books as the society might direct. In this connection Rice says: "Obviously, however, their plan was not merely to teach reading and writing; their real purpose was to improve the morals and the religious character of the 'learners.' They insisted that all reading lessons should be taken from the Bible. Even the primers and spelling books which they approved, consisted of words and short sentences from the scriptures."³⁰ The First Day Society recommended books to be used in connection with Sunday Schools or to be read by the pupils themselves. Some of these were Watts' *Songs, Fruits of the Father's Love*, Doaley's *Fables*, Barbauld's *Songs, Beauties of Creation, Catechism of Nature, Power of Religion, Economy of Human Life, The Whole Duty of Woman*, Bible and Testament. The Society suggested that these books might well be given as prizes or rewards.

The Union Society which promoted schools for the poor females

³⁰ Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union*, p. 45.

of Philadelphia taught the girls to read, write, and sew. In addition to this, the girls were required to commit to memory large portions of the Holy Scriptures, many devout hymns, and were instructed in such catechisms as were most approved of by their parents. The Digest of the minutes of the Methodist Conferences, 1744-1826, makes it very clear that Sunday schools had been organized for the children of the poor and that secular subjects were taught as well as the religious studies.

It appears that in America as well as in England, the first Sunday schools sought to provide for the education of poor children, the curriculum consisting of the rudiments of knowledge, such as reading, writing, and spelling, and, in addition, instruction in the catechism and the Bible. But this was soon to change, for as soon as the public schools became more widespread and better organized they were in a better position to serve the children of all classes by teaching them the rudiments of knowledge. Due to the improvement in the public schools, and because of the fact that the Sunday school was gradually taken over by the church to become its teaching institution, the Sunday school became distinctively religious in character and the secular subjects for the most part dropped out.

The Sunday school under church control. In the United States there never was the opposition to the Sunday school by the church as there was in England. To be sure, there are instances of bitter opposition in America, but for the most part the American churches took what is best called a negative attitude, bordering rather closely on mild opposition. A few concrete instances will reveal that attitude.

When Bishop White returned to America after learning of the Raikes movement, he found it impossible to introduce the idea into his "United Parish" in Philadelphia, partly because the movement was new and partly because it was English. In 1790 when several philanthropic people of Philadelphia decided to organize Sunday schools to improve the moral and religious conditions of the young, they found the churches not ready for such a movement. The pastor of the Congregational church in Norwichtown, Connecticut, violently protested when a young woman

of his congregation gathered a number of children and taught them in the church. He even went so far as to say, "You imps of Satan, doing the devil's work."³¹ Rice says that there were a number of places in the United States where the churches would not allow a Sunday school to be held in their buildings.³² He says, further: "It [the Sunday school] enlisted the laymen in an active effort to promote the kingdom of Christ. While winning lay members to its advocacy and support, it caused many in the ministry to look upon this feature as an invasion of their particular prerogatives, and so they continued to stand aloof from it, or simply to patronize it, as a scheme to be tolerated when used for the betterment of the ignorant and lower classes. It was not, in their view, a movement desirable in the organized work of the church."³³ The first quarter of the nineteenth century passed before the church began to abandon its aloofness and, in some cases, its opposition to the Sunday-school movement.

However, all this was soon to change. The home of Thomas Crenshaw was virtually a church, since it was one of the preaching stations of Bishop Asbury. William Elliott quickly moved his home Sunday school into a near-by church, and it has remained there until the present time. In 1790 the Methodist Conference meeting at Charleston, South Carolina, put itself unequivocally on record as in favor of the church's promoting and administering Sunday schools. When the 1796 edition of the Methodist Episcopal *Discipline* was published, Bishop Coke and Bishop Asbury commented on the Sunday schools in strongly favorable terms: "Let us labor among the poor in this respect, as well as among the competent. Oh, if our people in the cities, towns, and villages, were but sufficiently sensible of the magnitude of this duty, and its acceptableness to God—if they would establish Sabbath schools wherever practicable for the benefit of the children of the poor and sacrifice a few public ordinances every Lord's Day in this charitable and useful exercise, God would be to them instead of all the money they lose."³⁴

³¹ Trumbull, Henry Clay, *Yale Lectures on the Sunday School*, p. 128.

³² Rice, Edwin W., *The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union*, p. 48.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

³⁴ *Annual Report of the Sunday School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, 1851.

The public schools were more and more assuming as their function the training in citizenship, and were dealing almost exclusively with secular subjects in the course of study. On the other hand, here was a school that met on Sunday, the day set apart for public worship and religious activities. Much of the curriculum (the secular subjects) as time went on was being more and more adequately provided for by the public school. Since the church had no teaching agency of its own, thoughtful and interested churchmen began to realize the possibilities of the Sunday school not only as a charity institution but as the teaching agency of the church to impart religious instruction to the rising generation. It would, perhaps, be impossible to indicate exact stages in this development but subsequent events show conclusively that during the first quarter of the nineteenth century this tendency was in progress. Evidence of this tendency is found in the fact that in 1827 the Methodist Episcopal Church organized a Sunday School Union, the Unitarian Church organized its Sunday School Society in the same year, and the Lutheran Church organized a Sunday School Union in 1830. Within a dozen years the other great Protestant denominations recognized the promotion and care of the Sunday school as a part of their church activities.³⁵ Not only did they take responsibility for strengthening their Sunday schools and founding new ones among their people but they began to provide the schools with their own courses of study. The organization which had begun outside of the church four decades before had now come under its supervision.

This in brief is the story of how a philanthropic, charity school founded outside the church in England, spread to America, became a factor in early American elementary education, and in time came to be the chief teaching agency of the churches in America.

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CHAPTER IV

THE CATECHISM AS CURRICULUM MATERIAL

THE catechetical method represents a system of teaching which employs question and answer. When this method was used by the church to impart instruction in the truths and duties of the Christian religion, it gave rise to a body of materials which we call the catechism. As a result of the varying theological and doctrinal interpretations of Christian truth through the course of the centuries, a number of catechisms have been produced to meet the demands of different periods in the development of religious thought.

BRIEF HISTORICAL RÉSUMÉ OF CATECHISM
MAKING AND PRACTICE¹

In the early Christian Church the baptized children were prepared for membership by a course of instruction given orally. The question-and-answer method was employed and the pupils were called *catechumens*.

Regular and formal catechisms likely came into existence in the eighth and ninth centuries.² Later such opponents of the church as the Waldenses, Albigenses, and the followers of Wyclif and the Bohemian Brethren made wide use of the catechism.

It would be very natural to expect that the leaders of the Reformation should avail themselves of some method by which to teach their children the new doctrinal principles of the Christian religion and of the Protestant Church. Since the time-honored catechetical method was then in wide use it was also natural that they should turn to it. This is precisely what happened. Luther, the outstanding leader of the new religious movement,

¹ For fuller discussion of the catechetical use and practice see *The New International Encyclopædia*, vol. iv; *The Century Dictionary and Cyclopædia*, vol. ii; *Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. v; and the *Introduction to the Heidelberg Catechism*, published by Andrew Melrose, London, England.

² *The New International Encyclopædia*, p. 209.

published both a larger and a shorter catechism in 1529. Calvin published both a larger and a smaller catechism in 1536. These were widely used in Reformed Churches throughout Switzerland, France, and the Netherlands and in parts of Hungary. More important than Calvin's catechism is that known as the *Heidelberg Catechism*. It is the work of Caspar Alevianus and Zacharias Ursinus and has been characterized as "sweet-spirited, experiential, moderate, and happily phrased." As revised by the Synod of Dort, in 1619, the *Heidelberg Catechism* became the standard of most of the Reformed Churches of Central Europe and later of the Dutch and German Reformed Churches in America. Since 1648 the standard Presbyterian doctrines and duties are found in the *Larger* and *Shorter Catechisms*. These two catechisms and the Westminster Confession of Faith comprise the standard guides of the English-speaking Presbyterian Churches.³ The two catechisms, and the Confession of Faith, are all the work of the Assembly of Divines at Westminster. The *Shorter Catechism* has always proved the most popular, and was intended for those least proficient in the knowledge of the Christian faith. The *Larger Catechism* was especially favored by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1648. It has proved, in actual practice, however, too minute in its detail and too burdensome to the memory.⁴

The *Book of Common Prayer* contains the catechism of the Church of England. This Anglican Catechism is divided into two main parts: the first consists of the Baptismal covenant, the Apostolic Creed, the Decalogue, and the Lord's Prayer; the second part contains an exposition of the two sacraments—Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The catechism now used in the Anglican Church has departed widely from the first Anglican Catechism. It is very probable that Thomas Cranmer and Nicholas Ridley shaped the first part,⁵ which is spoken of as the "Shorter Catechism." At the beginning of the reign of James I there was held what is known as the Hampton Court Conference (1604). It

³ *The New International Encyclopædia*, vol. iv, p. 210.

⁴ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. v, p. 506.

⁵ *The New International Encyclopædia*, vol. iv, p. 210.

was the consensus of this group that the "Shorter Catechism" was too brief. At the suggestion of the king, James I, that an addition be made, the catechism was lengthened by the inclusion of an explanation of the two sacraments. This work was done by the Rev. Dr. John Overall, and it forms the second part of the book.

The Anglican Catechism is used in the Church of England, Ireland, Scotland, the British Dominions, and in the United States and elsewhere where Anglican or Episcopal Churches have been established.⁶

THE USE OF THE CATECHISM IN THE EARLY AMERICAN SUNDAY SCHOOLS

As indicated in the preceding chapter, the first Sunday schools in America organized according to Raikes' plan, were philanthropic in spirit and method. That being the case, the Bible, the catechism, and the Psalter were taught along with such subjects as reading, writing, spelling, and simple ciphering. We have noted already, in a general way, the factors in America that were soon to make a change in this order of things.

The Sunday school undergoing change. Two factors chiefly were responsible for the modification of the Sunday school: first, the increasing ability of the American public school to take care of the secular materials; secondly, the increasing tendency of the churches to take over the Sunday school as their teaching agency. Very early in the nineteenth century both of these tendencies became increasingly strong. Accordingly, the way was open for the Sunday school to devote all of its time to the religious instruction. Thus the Sunday school curriculum showed modification in that it became much more religious in character, the secular subjects being dropped. This was to be expected since the Sunday school had gradually become the teaching agency of the church. When the spelling books and the readers were eliminated from the Sunday-school curriculum and when the aim was more specifically to provide religious instruction, the teaching materials of the right sort were found to be lacking. The pupils, in the

⁶ Canon LIX of 1603, which has never been rescinded, directs that the youth be instructed in the catechism set forth in the *Book of Common Prayer*.

absence of assigned lessons out of reading and spelling books, were directed to the catechism and the Bible, which were already accessible.

Causes of doctrinal emphasis. The early Christians felt the necessity of insisting on definite convictions in respect to faith and doctrine in order to combat pagan influences successfully. It has already been pointed out that certain sects within the church, such as the Waldenses, Albigenses, and the Bohemian Brethren, employed the catechism in order that their children might share the doctrinal views of their elders.

Then came the Protestant Reformation with its institutional cleavage and doctrinal differences. Following the Reformation there was a long controversial period over doctrines, often referred to as the "battle of the creeds." As a natural consequence, the new doctrinal emphases that were commonly accepted and taught became crystallized into formal statements. These statements of creed or belief were emphasized by churches and parents as a necessary part of the religious equipment of childhood and youth. Religious people commended kindly acts and virtuous lives, and accepted the spirit of Jesus in principle, but the point of greatest emphasis was correct belief, and correctness in morals and life was in no sense accepted as a substitute for correctness in doctrine.

The Bible was placed in the hands of Protestants and was widely read, but the doctrinal points received the main emphasis. The social message of Jesus was undiscovered while the theological emphasis of Paul was unduly stressed. In view of the pervading spirit of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it is not hard to understand why the catechism was deemed so important, and why it held such a large place in all religious instruction. In the light of the dominant doctrinal emphasis, it is not at all surprising to find the catechism in the town schools of New England, the parish schools of the middle colonies, the Sunday Charity School of England, and the Philanthropic Schools of America.

When we examine the curriculum of the American Sunday school during the years 1790-1815, we find that the catechism holds the center of attention. The catechism had a double pur-

pose—to ground children in the essentials of the Christian doctrine and to impart biblical knowledge, but the stress was upon the former. During the first quarter of the nineteenth century the catechism was more generally used than the Bible as a means of formal instruction.⁷ In fact, this period has often been called the “Catechetical Period” of the Sunday school. The reason for this is clear. Many catechisms were in existence and thus could be utilized as teaching material. They lent themselves easily to divisions into sections and lessons for purposes of instruction. The Bible, to be sure, was at hand, but not in any systematic form for classroom use. This is ample evidence that the teachers and leaders of that day were giving the most attention to creed and doctrine, for these had been systematized and prepared for the instruction of childhood and youth. Naturally, therefore, when teachers desired to engage in systematic religious teaching, they turned to the catechism.

For a period of at least twenty-five years (1790–1815) the catechism was practically the only curriculum of the Sunday school. This was a natural consequence of the spirit of the times. The Wesleyan Revival had not yet turned the tide of influence in the direction of the Bible. Newer ideals in education had not yet broken the hold of the formal catechetical method. The curriculum for the first quarter century of the life of the American Sunday school consisted chiefly of the catechism, and the method of teaching was the time-honored question-and-answer.

After this brief sketch of catechetical instruction we will now consider the representative and characteristic catechetical materials used in the American Sunday schools during the so-called “Catechetical Period.”

THE WESTMINSTER SHORTER CATECHISM

In 1648 the Assembly of Divines at Westminster formulated a catechism, called *The Shorter Catechism*, which was later approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Contents of the Shorter Catechism. The catechism opens

⁷ Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union*, p. 73.

with the question, "What is the chief end of man?" and the query is answered in the statement that the chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever. The Bible is declared to be the "Word of God"—the rule and guide of man. God is said to be a Spirit having three manifestations, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, but "these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory." God in his eternal purpose has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass. Creation, therefore, is one of the decrees of God. When Creation was completed, the reign of Providence began, which was defined as "God's preserving and governing all his creatures and all of their actions." Men, because of their sin, lost this special act of Providence in their behalf. Sin is defined as "any want of conformity unto, or transgression of the law of God." In the great plan of God Jesus became the Redeemer for sin and consequently the Saviour of man. The moral law of God is summed up in the Ten Commandments, which the catechism explains in detail, and which is followed by an exposition of faith in Jesus Christ and repentance from sin. The value of a sacrament is defined not in terms of its inherent quality, nor in terms of virtue derived from the one who administers it, but only in terms of "the blessing of Christ and the working of the Spirit in them that by faith receive them." The sacraments of the New Testament are—Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Prayer is defined as "the offering up of our desires to God for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies." The petitions of the Lord's Prayer are explained in detail.

Examples of the content of the Shorter Catechism. Selections from the catechism are included here to illustrate its style, phrasing, content, and method.⁸

The Bible

- Q. What rule has God given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him?
A. The Word of God which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him.

⁸ Questions and answers taken from the *Shorter Catechism* contained in Boyd, James R., *The Child's Book on the Westminster Shorter Catechism*, 1855.

Trinity

- Q. Are there more Gods than one?
 A. There is but One only, the living and true God.
 Q. How many Persons are there in the Godhead?
 A. There are Three Persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in Power and Glory.

Sacraments

- Q. What is a Sacrament?
 A. A Sacrament is an holy ordinance instituted by Christ, wherein, by sensible signs, Christ and the Benefits of the new covenant are represented, sealed and applied to believers.
 Q. What are the Sacraments of the New Testament?
 A. The Sacraments of the New Testament are Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

The *Shorter Catechism* contains practically all of the concepts considered in the *Larger Catechism*, in briefer and simpler form.⁹ This doubtless accounts for the fact that it has enjoyed wider use and popularity than the *Larger Catechism*.

THE CATECHISMS OF ISAAC WATTS

Watts' catechisms for children and youth were used in congregational churches until superseded by the manuals of J. H. Stowell, G. H. Riddette, and others.¹⁰ The catechisms by Watts are graded for the different age groups.¹¹

The First Catechism. The *First Catechism* was intended for young children, beginning at the age of three or four years. The aim of the volume is stated in the preface: "The aim has been to get the most general and plainest principles of the Christian Religion in so short a form as to be easily learned by heart by a child of moderate capacity at four or five. By this means young children may treasure up a brief scheme of religion in the mind sufficient for their knowledge and practice at that age." Of the twenty-four questions and answers included in the course seven are cited here.

⁹ The *Larger Catechism* was ratified and adopted by the Synod of New York and Philadelphia held at Philadelphia, May 16, 1788.

¹⁰ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. v, p. 506.

¹¹ Perhaps more space is given to the catechisms of Isaac Watts than his importance as a writer of catechisms would warrant, but no other set of catechisms purport to furnish adaptations to so short a range of age groups, and, therefore, the catechisms by Watts furnish the best example of an attempt to furnish catechetical material suitable to all ages.

- Q. Can you tell me, child, who made you?
 A. The Great God who made heaven and earth.
 Q. What doth God do for you?
 A. He keeps me from harm by night and by day, and is always doing me good.
 Q. And what must you do for the great God who is so good to you?
 A. I must learn to know him first and then do everything to please him.
 Q. Where does God teach us to know him and please him?
 A. In his holy word, which is contained in the Bible.
 Q. And what if you do not fear God, nor love him, nor seek to please him?
 A. Then I shall be a wicked child, and the great God will be angry with me.
 Q. Why are you afraid of God's anger?
 A. Because he can kill my body and he can make my soul miserable after my body is dead.
 Q. But have you never done anything to make God angry with you already?
 A. Yes, I fear I have too often sinned against God, and deserved his anger.

The teacher was asked to see that the child understood every word of each question before the next question was asked, so that the pupil might not merely hear and say words. The child was expected to memorize the catechism *verbatim* before learning to read. (The questions and answers were dictated by the teacher.) Scripture texts were not included because it was felt that they would consume too much time, and would hold the child too long from the *Second Catechism*.

The concepts in this *First Catechism* seem incomprehensible to a child of four or five. It may be possible for the child to master the language, but the ideas and implications involved are not within his grasp.

The Second Catechism. Mr. Watts intended this catechism for children beginning at seven or eight years of age. Seventy-eight questions and answers comprise this catechism. Four representative questions and answers are included here, in order to demonstrate the nature of the material.¹²

- Q. Dear child, do you know what you are?
 A. I am a creature of God, for he made me both body and soul. Is. XLV, 11, 12. "Thus saith the Lord, I have made the earth, and created man upon it." Job X, 11. "Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh and fenced me with bones and sinews." Zech. XII, 1. "The Lord who formeth the spirit of man within him."
 Q. How do you know you have a soul?

¹² In many excerpts from old books the reader will note the evidence of careless proof-reading as well as the reckless rendering of Scripture texts. The present writer has made no attempt to harmonize these unfortunate features, as he cannot take liberties with quoted matter.

- A. Because I find something within me that can think and know, can wish and desire, can rejoice and be sorry, which my body cannot do. Job XXXII, 8. "There is a spirit in man." Job XXXV, 11, "who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven." Proverbs XXIII, 7. "As he thinketh in his heart so is he." Proverbs xi, 10. "Knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul." Is. XXVI, 8. "The desire of our soul is to thy name." Ps. XXXV, 9. "My soul shall be joyful in the Lord." Matt. XXVI, 38. "My soul is exceeding sorrowful."
- Q. How do you know that you have sinned in thought, word and deed against the blessed God?
- A. I have let evil thought run too much in my mind, and spoken too many evil words. I have too often done such deeds as are evil, and neglected what is good.
- Q. Whence comes it to pass that you are such a sinner?
- A. I was born into the world with inclinations to that which is evil, and I have too much followed these inclinations all my life. Ps. LI, 5. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Gen. VIII, 21. "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." Ephes. II, 3. "We all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as others."

In the preface to the *Second Catechism*, it is pointed out that at seven, or eight, the pupils should study the "Child's Catechism."¹³ It is a scheme of the Christian religion, drawn up much in the same form and method as the former, but it is much enlarged and comprehends many more particulars both of doctrine and duty." Other concepts considered in the catechism are—soul, knowledge of God, God's relation to us, how to serve God, love to God, sins to be avoided, the wrath of God, future punishment and future bliss.

A glance at the two catechisms reveals the fact that the second contains longer answers, more difficult material, and the Scripture texts. In the light of our modern psychology, this catechism seems hopelessly unsuited to the demands of developing childhood. The concepts are metaphysical and theological. The child is allowed no freedom of thought, expression, or development.

Watts' Third Catechism. This volume was said to be proper for youth at twelve or fourteen years of age.¹⁴ The author states

¹³ This means the *Second Catechism*.

¹⁴ Watts, Isaac, *A Catechism, Proper for Youth at Twelve or Fourteen Years of Age*. Preface.

in the preface that in this catechism the pupils enter into the deep things of God, and he further says that the material should be thoroughly committed to memory. Out of the one hundred and seven questions and answers, a few of the most representative are listed here for purposes of illustration:

Q. What is the chief end of man?

A. Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.¹⁵

Chief end. The chief design for which man was made, and which man should chiefly seek for.

To glorify God. To do him honor as the most glorious and most excellent Being.

To enjoy God. To rejoice in his presence and his love.

Q. What is God?

A. God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.

A spirit. A being that has understanding and will, but no shape nor parts, nor can be seen with the eyes.

Infinite. Without bounds.

Eternal. Without beginning or end.

Q. What is sin?

A. Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.

Conformity to the law. Being and doing what the law requires.

Transgression of the law. Being or doing what the law forbids.

Q. Who is the Redeemer of God's elect?

A. The only Redeemer of God's elect, is the Lord Jesus Christ, who being the eternal Son of God became man, and so was and continues to be, God and man in two distinct natures, and one person forever.

God's elect. Those whom God has chosen for his own people.

Jesus. A Saviour.

Christ. Anointed or appointed of God.

Q. What is sanctification?

A. Sanctification is the work of God's Spirit, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.

Whole man. Our thoughts, memory, will, affections, and all our faculty.

The image of God. That is the likeness of his Holiness.

To die unto sin. To forsake sin in heart and life.

To live unto righteousness. To follow after righteousness in heart and life.

These questions and answers illustrate the treatment employed in this catechism. The volume is found to deal with the "Works of Providence," "Man's Fall," "The Redemption of Jesus,"

¹⁵ Same language and thought as the Presbyterian *Shorter Catechism*.

"Justification," "Adoption," "The Commandments," and the "Sacraments as Effective Means of Salvation."

Watts' catechism on the sins and follies of youth. The catechism which really closes the series,¹⁶ was entitled, *A Preservation From the Sins and Follies of Childhood and Youth*. Mr. Watts begins by asking the question as to what constitutes frailties and follies, and then proceeds to answer his own question. He defines frailties and follies as "those things which God has not so fully or plainly forbidden, but which, if they are indulged, will lead into sinful practices, and are attended with many inconveniences."¹⁷ This catechism really falls into four major divisions: first, Sins against God; second, Sins against others; third, Sins against ourselves; fourth, Follies and frailties of children and youth. The sins against God are listed under three heads: ungodliness, profaneness, and self-sufficiency. Each of these is dealt with catechetically. For example:

Q. What is the first mark of ungodliness?

A. If I never know nor praise God for his own greatness and glory.

The sins against our neighbor are declared to be the following: Dishonour of superiors, pride and haughtiness of behaviour to equals and inferiors, immoderate anger, injustice, lying, evil speaking, slander, cruelty, spite, envy, and uncharitableness. Let us take the treatment of "anger" as an example of this section.

Q. What are the ill consequences of sinful anger?

A. These five.

Q. What is the first?

A. Railing and calling ill names.

Reason against this sin. Because railers are not fit for sober company, and are very displeasing to God.

Q. What is the second evil consequence of sinful anger?

A. Striking others, striving and fighting, which sometimes reaches even to blood and murder.

Reason against this sin. Because if we are injured, it is better to complain to parents or masters, that we may have right done us: whereas quarreling and fighting is but pleasing the devil, and is the cause of much mischief.

¹⁶ Other catechisms by Isaac Watts will be taken up in a footnote on pp. 79-80.

¹⁷ Watts, Isaac, *A Preservation from the Sins and Follies of Childhood and Youth*, preface.

Q. What is the third ill consequence of sinful anger?

A. Cursing and wishing mischief to befall others.

Reason against this sin. Because this is not loving our neighbor as ourselves. The tongue was made to bless God, and not to curse men, who are made after the image of God; and the mischief sometimes falls upon him that curses.

Q. What is the fourth ill consequence of sinful anger?

A. Revenge, or doing mischief to others, for some real or supposed injury they have done me.

Reason against this sin. Because it belongs to our rulers, and not to us to punish those that injure us. It is our duty to forgive.

Q. What is the fifth ill consequence of sinful anger?

A. Where it is indulged for a few hours, it often returns into sullenness, and if it continues long, it will grow into settled malice and hatred.

Reason against sullenness. Because it inclines children, when anything has offended them, not to eat or drink, not to speak or smile; but to go aside into corners and pout; or when they come into company, to be peevish, and scowl, and perhaps now and then throw out a dark and spiteful word. Now, all this is but taking revenge upon myself, as well as showing my ill temper to the world.¹⁸

The follies and frailties of children and youth are included under the following heads. 1. A whimsical or capricious temper. 2. Peevishness. 3. Impatience. 4. Selfishness. 5. Uncleanliness. 6. Heedlessness. 7. Rashness. 8. Fickleness. 9. Profaneness. 10. Tattling. The treatment of "fickleness" is taken as an example of this section.

Q. What is Fickleness, or the eighth folly of children?

A. I may be called fickle when I am soon weary of what I was very fond of before; when I am perpetually changing my desires and purposes, and always want something new.

Reason against this frailty. Because if I am always seeking out new things, new books, new lessons and new employments, I shall never dwell long enough upon any thing to become master of it, or to profit by it, according to the proverb, "A rolling stone gathers no moss." Besides, if I indulge a fickle temper, I shall be often tempted to break my appointments, and my friends will not know how to trust one that is ever to change.¹⁹

¹⁸ Watts, Isaac, *Preservation from the Sins and Follies of Youth*, pp. 7-8.

¹⁹ Watts, *ibid.*, p. 17. Doctor Watts, in addition to the catechisms described, prepared two others. One is called *Catechism of Scripture Names For Little Children* and contains questions and answers relative to the characters of Scripture. Thirty-six are chosen from the Old Testament and thirty-four from the New. It might well be called a biographical catechism. Example: "Who was Adam? A. The first man God made. Who was Job? A. The most patient man through pains and losses. Who was Jonah? A. A prophet who lay three days and nights in the belly of a fish." The other catechism is called the *Historical Catechism* and is supposed to be given to the child after he has learned the *Catechism of Scripture Names* perfectly. The author states: "Here I have collected together, in as brief a manner as I could, some of the more important transactions which are related in Scripture and which are

One is impressed by the negative attitude of the whole pamphlet. Its contents deal with "keeping away from," and seem to neglect the positive inspiration of a great ideal.

LUTHER'S SMALL CATECHISM

As indicated previously, Martin Luther was the author of two catechisms, the larger especially for the clergy, the smaller for those less proficient in Christian doctrines. In the preface of the *Small Catechism* we find the motive for its preparation.

Martin Luther to All Faithful, Pious, Pastors and Preachers: Grace, Mercy and Peace in Christ Jesus, our Lord! The deplorable destitution which I recently observed, during a visitation of the churches, has impelled and constrained me to prepare this catechism or Christian Doctrine in such a small and simple form.

O ye bishops! How will you ever render account to Christ for having so shamefully neglected the people, and having never for a moment exercised your office! May the judgment not overtake you! You command communion in one kind, and urge your human ordinances; but never ask, in the mean time, whether the people know the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, or any part of God's word. Woe, woe, unto you everlastingly.

Therefore, I entreat you all, for God's sake, my dear brethren who are pastors and preachers, to devote yourself heartily to your office, and have pity upon the people who are committed to your charge. Help us to inculcate the catechism upon them, especially upon the young. Let those who are not able to do better, take these tables and forms and set them word for word before the people.

The *Small Catechism* is divided into six parts, (1) The Ten Commandments, (2) The Creed, (3) The Lord's Prayer, (4) The Sacrament of Holy Baptism, (5) The Office of the Keys, and (6) The Sacrament of the Altar. One of the unique features about this catechism is the section entitled "The Office of the Keys," included here.

most proper to be known by children. Some children may learn this historical catechism by ten or twelve years of age in so easy a manner, yet I do not propose it to be learned by all before they begin the *Assembly's Catechism*; and therefore, I call it a catechism for children and youth, supposing that many may not have fully committed it to memory till they are fourteen years old."

The book falls into two sections—Old and New Testament history. The method is catechetical throughout, and the plan is chronological, beginning with Genesis and proceeding on through to the book of Revelation. A few examples will give us an idea of the book.

"Q. Who was the maker of the world?

A. The Almighty God made the heavens and the earth and all things that are in them. Gen. I:1, and II:1.

Q. Who was saved when the world was drowned?

A. Noah, the righteous man, was saved with all his family and a few living creatures of every kind. Gen. VI:9, 18, 19 and VII:1.

Q. Who was the most famous of Jacob's sons?

A. Joseph, whom his brothers sold into Egypt. Gen. XXXVII:27."

The Office of the Keys

As the Head of the Family Should Teach It In All Simplicity to His Household.

What is the office of the keys? Answer:

It is the peculiar church power which Christ has given to His church on earth to forgive the sins of penitent sinners unto them, but to retain the sins of the impenitent, as long as they do not repent.

Where is this written? Answer:

Thus writes the holy Evangelist John, Chapter twentieth: The Lord Jesus breathed on His disciples, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever's sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever's sins ye retain, they are retained.

What do you believe according to these words? Answer:

I believe that when the called ministers of Christ deal with us by His divine command, especially when they exclude manifest and impenitent sinners from the Christian congregation, and, again, when they absolve those who repent of their sins and are willing to amend, this is as valid and certain, in heaven also, as if Christ, our dear Lord, dealt with us Himself.²⁰

Another section of the catechism is included here which shows how the unlearned should be taught to confess.

What is confession? Answer:

Confession embraces two parts: one is that we confess our sins; the other, that we receive absolution of forgiveness from the confession, as from God Himself, and in no wise doubt, but firmly believe, that by it our sins are forgiven before God in Heaven.

What sins should we confess? Answer:

Before God we should plead guilty of all sins, even of those which we do not know, as we do in the Lord's Prayer; but before the confessor we should confess those sins only which we know and feel in our hearts.

Which are these? Answer:

Here consider your station according to the Ten Commandments, whether you are a father, mother, son, daughter, master, mistress, servant; whether you have been disobedient, unfaithful, slothful; whether you have grieved any person by word or deed; whether you have stolen, neglected or wasted aught, or done any other injury.²¹

These questions and answers are a fair sample of the style and method pursued throughout the catechism. Martin Luther also insisted that the parents and teachers should teach the children the text of the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer.

The *Small Catechism* is theological and doctrinal throughout,

²⁰ Luther, Martin, *The Small Catechism*. Section on The Office of the Keys in the translation authorized by the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America, pp. 21 and 22.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 22 and 23.

although including less of the "fear element" than the catechisms by Doctor Watts. It is a clear and concise statement of belief in the main tenets of the Christian religion. "It contains strong food for strong men, and yet milk for babies; for Luther had the enviable faculty of being able to express the deepest things in the plainest words."²²

THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

The *Heidelberg Catechism*, the work of two scholars of Heidelberg,²³ has long been regarded as the doctrinal standard in the Reformed (Dutch) Church,²⁴ both on the Continent and in the New World. The catechism begins with a section on man's misery, then passes to a section dealing with man's redemption, in terms of God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, the Holy Sacraments, Holy Baptism, and the Holy Supper of Jesus Christ. A discussion of thankfulness occupies the third division. The rest of the book is concerned with the Ten Commandments and prayer.

A few selections chosen at random from this catechism illustrate the style and spirit of the book.²⁵

Question 1. What is the only comfort in life and death?

Answer That I with body and soul, both in life and death, am not my own, but belong to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ, who, with his precious blood, has fully satisfied for all my sins, and delivered me from all of the power of the devil; and so preserves me, that without the will of my heavenly Father, not a hair can fall from my head; yea, that all things must be subservient to my salvation; and therefore, by his Holy Spirit, he also assures me of eternal life, and makes me sincerely willing and ready henceforth to live unto him.

Question 6. Did God, then create man so wicked and perverse?

Answer By no means; but God created man good, and after his own image, in righteousness and true holiness, that he might rightly know God his Creator, heartily love him, and live with him in eternal happiness to glorify and praise him.

Question 27. What dost thou mean by the providence of God?

²² *Heidelberg Catechism*, Introduction, published by Andrew Melrose, 16 Pilgrim Street, London, 1900.

²³ It is the work of Caspar Alevianus and Zacharias Ursinus.

²⁴ *The Century Dictionary and Cyclopædia*, vol. ii, p. 859.

²⁵ Translated from the German by the Rev. H. Harbaugh, 1854.

Answer The Almighty and everywhere present power of God; whereby, as it were, by his hand, he upholds and governs heaven, earth, and all creatures; so that herbs and grass, rain and drought, fruitful and barren years, meat and drink, health and sickness, riches and poverty, yea, all things, come not by chance but by his fatherly hand.

Question 28. What advantage is it to us to know that God has created, and by his providence doth still uphold all things?

Answer That we may be patient in adversity; thankful in prosperity; and that in all things, which may hereafter befall us, we place our firm trust in our faithful God and Father, that nothing shall separate us from his love; since all creatures are so in his hands, that without his will they cannot so much as move.

Question 34. Wherefore callest thou him, Our Lord?

Answer Because he hath redeemed us, both soul and body, from all our sins, not with gold or silver, but with his precious blood, and hath delivered us from all the power of the devil; and thus made us his own property.

Although the *Heidelberg Catechism* is the result of a dual authorship, it is harmonious and symmetrical in thought and content. On the whole, the catechism is wonderfully "sweet-spirited," the didactic and dialectic influence of Ursinus being artfully interwoven with the eloquence and fervor of Alevianus. One has only to compare the content of this catechism with Watts' or with the work of the Westminster Divines to feel a warmth, pathos, and imagination in the *Heidelberg Catechism* that is not found in the others. It also reveals a certain moderation in the doctrinal statements, free from rancor and controversy. The stately language rises at times almost to poetry and one feels back of the statements "a beating pulse and a quivering heart."²⁶

THE METHODIST CATECHISMS

The Methodists in America during the first half of the nineteenth century used the catechisms of the Wesleyan Methodists in England. There were three in all, suited to different age groups.

Number I. For Children of Tender Years. This catechism was intended for children under seven years of age. It is divided into five sections as follows: (1) God, (2) The Creation of Man,

²⁶ The *Heidelberg Catechism*. Introduction. The edition published by Andrew Melrose. London, England, 1900.

(3) The Fall of Man, (4) The Redemption of Man, and (5) Heaven and Hell. A quotation from two of the sections, will reveal the style and spirit of the Catechism.

Section 1. Of God

Who made you?

God.

Who is God?

An Infinite and Eternal Spirit, one that always was, and always will be.

Does God love you?

Yes, he loves everything which he has made.

What has God made?

Everything, and in particular *man*.

Section 3. Of the Fall of Man

Did our first parents continue happy and holy?

No, they sinned against God and fell into misery.

What evil did they bring upon themselves thereby?

They were driven out of paradise, and became subject to guilt, and pain and death.

How did it hurt them?

All mankind are born in sin, so that their hearts are corrupt, and inclined only to evil, and they are become subject to pain and death.

Criticism may justly be directed toward this catechism. The concepts presented are so far removed from the life of a little child that they appear impossible. What does a little child know of a Spirit "Infinite and Eternal?" To tell a little child that our first parents were driven out of paradise and became subject to guilt, pain, sin, and death is to present a phase of life outside of his experience. It seems perfectly absurd that a little child under seven will understand the concept of human nature—corrupt and inclined only to evil, subject to pain and death. It is equally unsuitable to describe a dark and bottomless pit, full of fire and brimstone, to the sensitive child of tender years, in order to explain the nature of sin and its consequences.

An appendix to No. 1 contains a short catechism of Scripture names. The following examples are typical:

Who was Adam?

The first man that God made, and the father of us all.

Who was Enoch?

A man who pleased God, and who was taken up to heaven without dying.

Who was Noah?

That good man who was saved when the world was drowned.

Then follows a section devoted to prayers for little children, a morning prayer, a prayer for evening, and a young child's prayer for the Lord's Day. These prayers were to be learned by the children while they were mastering the catechism, and when used were to be followed by the repetition of the Lord's Prayer.

The Young Child's Prayer for the Lord's Day

Suffer me not, O Lord, to waste this day in sin and folly; but let me worship thee with much delight. Teach me to know more of thee, and to serve thee better than ever I have done before, that I may be fit to dwell in heaven, where thy worship and service will be everlasting, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Number II. For Children of Seven Years of Age and Upwards.

In this catechism the principles of the first catechism are enlarged; and Scripture proofs are placed under the answers, where they can receive appropriate illustration from the Word of God. Nine sections are found in Number II, as follows: (1) Of God, (2) Of the Creation of Man, (3) Of the Fall of Man, (4) Of the Redemption of the World Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, (5) Of the Holy Ghost, (6) Of the Law of God, (7) Of the Sacraments, (8) Of the Word of God and Prayer, and (9) Of Death and Judgment. The content is very similar to that of catechism Number I, and the following illustrations are typical of the uniform treatment throughout the book:

Section 1. Of God

Q. What is God?

A. An Infinite and Eternal Spirit.

John IV, 24. God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth.

Q. What can God do?

A. Whatever He will.

Job XLII, 2. I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.

Section 9. Of Death and Judgment

Q. What is death?

A. The separation of the soul from the body.

Q. Is it not a fearful thing to die?

A. It is, to all but true Christians.

Q. Why is it not a fearful thing to them to die?

A. Because sin, which is the sting of death, is taken away from them, and because they know that after death they shall go to heaven.

I Cor. XV, 55, 57. O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory . . . through our Lord, Jesus Christ.

II Cor. V, 1. For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

The appendix to Number II contains a short catechism of Scripture history and examples of prayer. The Scripture history embraces the main facts and events of both the Old and New Testaments, set forth in catechetical fashion. In the section on prayer, examples are given of morning and evening prayers and child's grace before and after meat.

Number III. For the Use of Young Persons. The third and last in the series of Wesleyan catechisms was intended for young people. Its contents deal with the evidences of Christianity and the truth of the Holy Scriptures. The strictly catechetical method shifts somewhat in this booklet to the form of a dialogue between youth and his teacher. Youth asks the questions and the teacher answers them. Sometimes the answers by the teacher are given at great length. For example, when youth asks his teacher, "If the first and fundamental truths of religion were known in the early ages of the world, is it not a proof of the weakness of man's reason, that he fell into so many and such ridiculous errors on religious subjects?" the teacher takes two full pages to answer.²⁷

Some typical questions taken from the book will be noted.

Youth	Does God make revelation of his will to every man?
Teacher	Not immediate revelations. He revealed his will first to Adam; then to Noah, and Abraham, and others among the patriarchs; to Moses and the Prophets, and finally by Christ and his apostles. We acknowledge no other revelations, and these were intended in different degrees for the benefit of mankind at large. ²⁸
Youth	What is meant by Revelation?
Teacher	A supernatural communication of truth from God to man, by which we are instructed in the will of God, respecting us, both as to what we are to believe, and to do; how we are to worship him; what we may hope from his mercy, or fear from his displeasure. ²⁹
Youth	Pray explain another term often used—Dispensation.
Teacher	This word signifies a dispensing or bestowing; and in the theolog-

²⁷ *The Catechism of the Wesleyan Methodists, Number III, For the Use of Young Persons*, pp. 11-12.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

ical sense, means the truth and grace which have been dispensed in different periods of the world by successive revelations of the will and mercy of God to mankind. For this reason we say the *Patriarchal*, the *Mosaic* or *Jewish* and the *Christian dispensations*; the first commencing with Adam and reaching to the giving of the law by Moses; the second from that event to the death of Christ; the third from the death of Christ to the end of the world.³⁰

- Teacher What is the *internal evidence* of the truth of Scripture?
- Youth The excellent nature and tendency of its doctrines; a subject on which I desire to be furnished with illustration.
- Teacher Consider, first, the explicitness, sublimity, and evident truth of the representations which the Scriptures make of the nature and attributes of God, respecting which the wisest heathens fell into errors so gross and fatal. He is there exhibited as the great and sole First Cause of all things, eternal, self-existent, present in all places, knowing all things; infinite in power and wisdom; and perfect in goodness, justice, holiness, and truth. These discoveries of revelation have satisfied the human mind on this great and primary doctrine, and have given to it a resting place which it never before found.
- Youth Views so just and clear as to the divine nature, I acknowledge, were never acquired by heathens.
- Teacher Consider also the representations which the Scriptures made of the moral condition of *man*.
- Youth But how does this prove the excellence of the Scriptures?
- Teacher By proving this truth; for all the representations which they make of our moral condition are substantiated by universal observation and experience; and to know our fallen and corrupt state is the first step to the remedy.
- Youth How does it appear that the account the Scriptures give us of man's moral state, which is indeed sufficiently humbling, is confirmed by observation and experience?
- Teacher The Old and New Testaments agree in representing the human race as *actually* vicious and capable of the greatest enormities, when without moral check and control; so that not only individual happiness, but social also, is constantly obstructed or endangered. To this the history of all ages bears witness and present experience gives its teaching.³¹

The catechism *For the Use of Young Persons* is divided into six chapters: I. Definitions and Explanation. II. A Revelation From God Highly Probable and Necessary. III. The Evidence by Which a Revelation May Be Satisfactorily Proved to Be Divine. IV. The Antiquity, Genuineness, and Authenticity of the Books of Scripture. V. Internal Evidence of the Truth of Scripture. VI. Objections Answered.

³⁰ *The Catechism of the Wesleyan Methodists, Number III, For the Use of Young Persons*, p. 5.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 62-63.

This catechism is really a treatise on Christian doctrine for the use of young people. It is difficult, abstract, exceedingly uninteresting, and far beyond the comprehension of the average young person who has not had a philosophical training.

The Wesleyan catechisms, like those of the Westminster Divines and of Isaac Watts, state their truth in terms of formal dogmas, using clear and definite language. There is a dispassionate application of the reason and the intellect to the problems under consideration. Luther's *Small Catechism* is happier in its style and phraseology, and possesses a degree of personal warmth. The *Heidelberg Catechism* is outstanding for its style, phraseology, warmth, and beauty.

OTHER CATECHISMS

In addition to these more widely known and used catechisms, already discussed,³² there were some other catechisms of a different content that should receive consideration here.

A Scripture catechism. A few catechisms dealt primarily with Scripture material. The Scripture catechism studied here was written by Menzies Rayner, a Massachusetts clergyman. The preface opens by saying: "Viewing the Holy Scriptures as a revelation of the will of God to man, an acquaintance with their sacred contents must be infinitely important and desirable. Every attempt, therefore, to illustrate this, and to impress their invaluable truths upon the mind and memory, deserves encouragement."³³ The author states that he has endeavored to give a faithful and correct history of all the most important events, characters, and circumstances recorded in the Old and New Testaments with occasional inferences and observations. More specifically, the principal subjects covered are, Creation, Cain and Abel, Moses and the Hebrew Nation, David the Psalmist and King of Israel, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Job, Jesus, the Apostles, Evangelists, the book closing with a chapter on Paul the Apostle.

Selections from three sections will illustrate the nature and plan of the book:

³² Consideration has not been given the Anglican Catechism, but its nature and content will be examined under "The Present Use of the Catechism," Chap. v of this study.

³³ Rayner, Menzies, *A Catechism of the Bible*.

CHAPTER I. CREATION

(As told in the book of Genesis)

- Q. How long was God employed in the work of creation?
 A. Six days. "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is." Gen. 1:31; Exod. XX. 11.

CHAPTER II. CAIN AND ABEL

- Q. How did the Lord testify of his respect for Abel's offering?
 A. We are not told. Perhaps by fire from heaven descending and consuming the sacrifice, or by some other visible tokens.
 Q. When Cain saw that Abel's offering was respected, in preference to his own, what effect did it have upon him?
 A. He was very wroth, and his countenance fell. Gen. IV. 5.

CHAPTER XII. MOSES AND THE HEBREW NATION

(History of the Hebrew Nation)

- Q. What was the descent of Moses?
 A. He was of the Hebrew nation, a descendant of Levi, the third son of Jacob by Leah.
 Q. By what means were the first born of Egypt slain?
 A. By destroying angels. . . .
 Q. Had the Passover any further meaning than just to be kept as a remembrance?
 A. It was doubtless typical of our blessed Saviour who is called the Lamb of God, and our Passover, who was sacrificed for us. . . .
 Q. Was Moses typical of Christ?
 A. Both he and his brother Aaron, unquestionably were—Moses as Mediator, and Lawgiver, and Aaron as High Priest. Acts VII: 37; Heb. V: 4, 5.³⁴

It is very evident from a study of this book that the aim was to give biblical information through the medium of the catechism. The answers to the questions are frequently in the language of the Scriptures, and in those instances the biblical references are cited. The approach is chronological, beginning with Genesis and touching the outstanding characters and events throughout the Bible. The method is exactly the same as that employed in the doctrinal catechisms but the content of the course is biblical rather than doctrinal.

A catechism, of religious and social duties. A catechism, unique in that it combined religious, political, and social duties, was prepared by Hezekiah Packard in 1796, and published a second time in 1802. It was called, *A Catechism Containing the First Principles of Religion and Social Duties*. In the preface

³⁴ Rayner, Menzies, *A Catechism of the Bible*, pp. 10-12.

the author states his purpose in these words: "My design in the following questions and answers is to tell you how you may become regular and good children, and how you may secure the esteem of men and the favor of God. This book contains what you ought to believe and practice, what you ought to know and do."

In order that we may understand the content of the book, three representative extracts, one from each section, will be given here. The first section deals with applied religion, the author of the book desiring the children to be interested in and manifest benevolence and kindness toward others around them. The sample materials have been chosen to bring out this point:

- Q. 3. What must you do to please and enjoy God forever?
 A. I must love and serve God; I must love and obey my parents; I must speak the truth, and be just and kind.³⁵
- Q. 52. How should we manifest our love to our neighbor?
 A. By our benevolence, kindness and friendly behavior.³⁶
- Q. 53. What should be our conduct toward persons who affront and injure us?
 A. We are not to render evil for evil; but if they appear sorry and penitent, we are to forgive them, and we hope that God, on our repentance, will forgive our offenses against him.³⁷
- Q. 54. How should we treat inferior animals?
 A. As they are creatures of God, we should treat them with tenderness and not torment and destroy them in sport.³⁸
- Q. 79. What methods should be taken to promote church music?
 A. As singing in God's house is designed to raise and cherish devotional feelings in the assembly, it ought to be conducted in a regular manner; and as it is a matter of common interest and concern, the whole religious society ought to encourage and support it.³⁹

Section II is called a political catechism and the purpose is to lead children to a knowledge of society and to train them in the duties of citizenship. Out of the twenty-four questions and answers in the section, eight are given here.

- Q. What is civil government?
 A. Civil government is an establishment of legal authority and the administration of public affairs, according to original articles of mutual agreement, which teach rulers how to govern and subjects how to obey.
- Q. Are all men free and equal?
 A. Though men possess a diversity of talents and advantages, they are born

³⁵ Packard, Hezekiah, *A Catechism Containing the First Principles of Religious and Social Duties*, p. 15.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

equally free with regards to rights, obligations, and duties, essential to human nature.

Q. What kinds of government are there in the world?

A. There are three general forms which are, however, differently modified.

Q. What are they called?

A. Monarchy, where the sovereign power is lodged in one person; Aristocracy, where the supreme power is holden by a few individuals; and Democracy, where the supreme power remains in the people.⁴⁰

Q. Does the Gospel encourage and patronize civil government?

A. Such was the state of the Jews in our Saviour's time that he did not say much about politics or the love of one's country.

Q. What was our Saviour's conduct with regard to the rulers and laws of his country?

A. He paid respect and yielded obedience to both.⁴¹

Q. What are the reasons and grounds for maintaining social order and civil government?

A. The social nature of man and the revealed will of God.

Q. How does it appear that civil society, in the improved state, is agreeable to the nature of man and to the will of God?

A. Civil society gives a more liberal play and a larger scope to our social affections, which God requires us to exercise, and which conduce to enjoyment and usefulness; and, as civil society improves, human happiness always increases.⁴²

Part III is concerned principally with those elements thought to be beneficial to young people and the heads of families. The questions and answers center around such concepts as "The definition of natural religion," "Distinction between natural religion and revelation," "Profaning the name of God," "Intemperance," "Extravagance," "Injustice," and "Wantonness." For purposes of illustration, let us examine the treatment of pride, malice, envy, and untruth.

Q. What is pride?

A. Pride is that degrading passion which leads a man to think too highly of himself and too meanly of others.

Q. What is malice?

A. Malice is a deliberate desire to injure others with provocation.

Q. What is envy?

A. Envy is that forbidden passion, which is offended with what it knows to be good, and hates what it is obliged to approve.

Q. What is a lie?

A. A lie is a criminal violation of the truth.⁴³

⁴⁰ Packard, Hezekiah, *A Catechism Containing the First Principles of Religious and Social Duties*, pp. 50-51.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 55.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

- Q. And what motives have we to avoid these sins of the heart and life?
 A. We have every motive which can rationally actuate a rational mind, or deserve the attention of a moral agent.
 Q. And if we practice the virtues which have been recommended, and avoid the sins, which have been described, what will be our recompense of reward?
 A. We shall secure the blessing of inward peace and enjoy the esteem of our acquaintances; and we shall obtain the approbation of God and the happiness of heaven.⁴⁴

A comparison of this catechism with its contemporaries reveals at least the following differences: (1) It is less difficult in style and content than the catechisms by Dr. Isaac Watts or the *Shorter Catechism* of the Westminster Divines; (2) it is unique among catechisms in that it treats of man's civil and political relations and in that it places great stress on the social relations of life. It presents the view that religion ought to function in all the relationships of life, even to the right treatment of wild and domestic animals. This does not mean that other catechisms ignore the place of religion in the social relations of life; the point is that this one gives special emphasis to that subject. (3) Like the others, it emphasizes the future rewards of a good life, but, more than the others, it stresses the value of a religious life for the inward peace and satisfaction that it gives.

A SUMMARY AND EVALUATION OF THE CATECHETICAL METHOD

The aim. The religious educational aim of this period is not difficult to determine when one knows the nature of the material comprising the course of study. The chief objective seemed to be to get the child right with God through a study and acceptance of correct doctrine and a contact with the Divine Word, so that the child might be in a saved relationship with God, for the future well-being of his immortal soul. This is clearly implied throughout all the catechisms and definitely expressed in some of the hymn books for children. As an example of the latter statement, note the words in a hymn book for children printed in 1822: "Jesus has given his life to redeem you from sin and

⁴⁴ Packard, Hezekiah, *A Catechism Containing the First Principles of Religious and Social Duties*, p. 70.

death and from this present evil world. We direct you to seek your Saviour early."⁴⁵

In the light of this aim of religious education, one is not surprised at the large space given in the curriculum to sin, preparation for death, and the after life. This is emphasized over and over again in the catechisms, as we have seen, and is a constant thread running through the Sunday-school hymnology of this period. One or two selections from children's hymns will reveal this emphasis:

"I will rejoice in God my Saviour
And magnify this act of love.
I'm lost in wonder at his favor,
Which him to leave his throne could move,
To take on him my sickly nature,
To suffer for his wretched creature,
Sin's curse and keenest pain:
And death pangs to sustain, my soul to gain."⁴⁶

Watchfulness or preparation for death is clearly enjoined in the following selections:

"Why should I say, 'Tis yet too soon,
To seek for heaven, or think of death?
A flower may fade before the noon,
And I this day may lose my breath.

"Great God, how terrible art thou
To sinner e'er so young!
Grant me thy grace, and teach me how
To tame and rule my tongue.

"O Lord, forgive a sinful child
Whose heart is all unclean;
How base am I, and all defiled,
By the vile work of sin!"⁴⁷

"How justly might thine anger rise,
And sink me down to hell,
To feel the worm that never dies,
In endless flame to dwell!"⁴⁸

⁴⁵ *Hymns for children*. Printed by Conrad Zentler, Philadelphia, 1822.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁴⁷ *The Sunday School Companion*. Second Edition, 1825, pp. 25-26.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

Training the child for a well-rounded, effective, Christian life in this world was neglected in order to fulfill the theological, "other-worldly" objective. To be sure, honesty, sobriety, and right dealing were stressed, but an examination of the catechetical material leaves one with the impression that these were overshadowed by an effort to secure God's favor and a future home with him in heaven.

The aim of the catechetical materials and method was too narrow and restricted. In its "other-worldly" emphasis it failed to take into account sufficiently the maintenance and extension of the kingdom of God on earth. It stressed subject matter at the expense of the child. The life-situations of the child were not at the heart of the curriculum. However, we need to remember the spirit of the age with its emphasis still on doctrinal correctness. Of course the leaders and teachers had the well-being of the child at heart, and they had a passion for the betterment of child life,⁴⁹ but their aim was narrow and their method out of keeping with child nature.

The method employed. The method, like the aim, was narrow and formal. It was catechetical and memoriter. Pupils were supposed to memorize thoroughly the answers to the questions asked by the catechist. "The very form of a catechism implies that questions are to be asked by the instructor and answers given by the pupil, that there is to be committing to memory and reciting of that which is so committed."⁵⁰ Explanation and discussion were not often indulged in. There was nothing in the material to call forth expression on the part of the pupils. The catechisms were so formed, and the concepts were so advanced that the whole catechetical system developed into an unnatural and forced cramming of the mind.

Luther insisted that the pupils should not only be required to memorize the text of the catechism but that the teachers were to exercise care that the children understood the meaning of the text.⁵¹ The ideal in the mind of this great teacher was but poorly

⁴⁹ Clearly emphasized in the Introduction to the *Albion Catechism*.

⁵⁰ General Synod Edition of Luther's *Small Catechism*, preface. 1893.

⁵¹ Luther, Martin, *The Small Catechism*, preface.

realized, and the expression "Catechetical Lectures" in itself indicates that explanation resulting in learning was lacking. The "lectures" represent a "pouring-in-process," with the pupil the passive recipient. The catechisms are built on the point of view that religion is largely based on a body of knowledge, on facts that parents, teachers, and clergymen must communicate to the rising generation. The method of acquiring this body of knowledge was that of memorization. When one possessed this body of facts, he was considered instructed in the religious life.

Grading the catechetical instruction. Although graded lessons in the religious curriculum are the product of the twentieth century, we must not conclude that the Sunday-school writers of the early period were insensible to the problem of adapting instruction to the different ages and capacities of children. The examination of the catechetical materials leads one to the conclusion that there was a decided attempt to adapt the catechetical instruction to the capacities of the child insofar as those capacities were understood.

Before the close of the eighteenth century the Wesleys in England were addressing themselves seriously to this problem. John Wesley realized that the concepts of the catechism were too difficult for children, and accordingly published in 1745 a little book entitled *Instructions for Children*, which was very popular in Methodist circles, running into seven editions in fifteen years.⁵² Wesley later published *Lessons for Children* in four parts, a second edition appearing in 1816. "The lessons consist chiefly of extracts from the Scripture and the Apocrypha with a few explanatory footnotes and references. The most useful portions of Scripture, such as children may the most easily read and such as most concern them to know, are set down in the same order and the same words as in the Holy Scriptures."⁵³

The catechisms which were used in the early American Sunday schools, likewise, show the same tendency in the direction of adaptation. To go back to an earlier period one might point out John Cotton's *Milk for Babes*. Although this volume seemed

⁵² Wesley, John, *Instructions for Children*. Seventh Edition, London, 1760.

⁵³ Green, Richard, *The Works of John and Charles Wesley*, published by C. H. Kelley, London, 1896.

poor nourishment for tender years, the author was conscious, at least, that children ought to be given materials which were different from those for adults. Joseph Sutcliffe, author of the *Albion Catechism*, was sympathetic to the principle of adapting materials to the needs and capacities of children. He suggests, in the introduction, that if children have not read the New Testament throughout, it may be preferable to begin at the fifth section (Angels), since the first lessons, dealing with the Deity and the Trinity, are necessarily difficult. "Thus by a slow, but constant course, the children will be prepared to hear sermons, and to read the Scriptures with edification."

We have indicated that the Wesleyan catechisms were widely used in America among the Methodists,⁵⁴ and we have noted in an examination of these catechisms that Number I was intended for children of tender years. Number II was definitely intended for children seven years of age and upward.⁵⁵ Number III assumes the form and difficulty of a formal and analytical treatise on theology and the truths of the Holy Scriptures.

An imperfect attempt at grading may also be noted in the catechism, prepared by Doctor Watts,⁵⁶ who planned that children begin the *First Catechism* at three or four years of age, the *Second Catechism* at seven or eight, and the *Third Catechism* at twelve and fourteen years of age. Running parallel with the doctrinal catechisms were two on the Bible, *Catechism of Scripture Names* and the *Historical Catechism*. In the preface to the latter Doctor Watts definitely states that it is to be studied after the former has been mastered. The very fact that two catechisms, a short and a larger, were prepared by the Westminster Divines, and likewise two by Martin Luther, signifies the same general tendency toward gradation.

It is indeed obvious that the subject matter of the doctrinal catechisms, in the very nature of the case, defied simplification. A child could not be taught about redemption, regeneration, rebirth, salvation from sin, the sacrifice of Jesus, the meaning of

⁵⁴ The Methodists in America relied entirely upon the Wesleyan catechisms until about the middle of the nineteenth century.

⁵⁵ Page 73ff., of the present chapter.

⁵⁶ Page 74ff., of the present chapter.

the cross, eternal punishment, and the significance of the sacraments, in simple terms. Just so long as the makers of the course of study failed to grasp the idea that the child was not a miniature adult, and demanded a different material as well as a different treatment, little progress was possible in the field of religious education. Although teachers and leaders realized in some degree the need for adaptation and gradation of material, they could not be successful in grading doctrinal concepts, so that children would spontaneously respond to them. Child nature had not yet been discovered.

Opposition to the catechism. The catechism, it would seem, occupied so impregnable a position in the curriculum of religious education during the first quarter of the nineteenth century that this period was called the "Catechetical Period" of the Sunday school.

In a sense the catechism had many things in its favor. In it the memory method (commonly used and accepted) was employed. It emphasized doctrine, and this was a period when doctrines were regarded as having great significance. It was systematic and logical in its arrangement, and thus provided a ready source of textbook material for the school that was so poverty-stricken in this regard. There was also the advantage of long usage.

However, in spite of all this, the second quarter of the nineteenth century marks a considerable departure from the use of this time-honored system of religious instruction. The protest was partially pedagogical, but more largely it represented a shift from the doctrinal to the scriptural emphasis in religion. There were deep-lying causes at work which were responsible for the change of emphasis, such as the influence of the Wesleyan Revival and other influences.

Following 1815, the catechism suffered a rather serious decline. The Bible made a stronger bid for popularity and moved nearer to the center of the curriculum. At the beginning of this new tendency, in the absence of biblical lessons, the Bible itself was used. In view of the supremacy of the memoriter method, the Bible was used accordingly with very poor discrimination. The

years 1823 and following, mark the beginning of the use of lesson material directly from the Bible, which rapidly crowded the catechism out of its long-established place. With the increasing use of the Bible there came a corresponding neglect of the catechism.

CHAPTER V

THE CATECHISM SINCE THE FIRST QUARTER
OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

As we have seen in the last chapter, the catechism reached the height of its influence in the American Sunday schools between 1785 and 1815. Since that time it seems to have occupied a less stable place in the religious curriculum. We will now trace the fortunes of the catechism in the Sunday school from the so-called "Doctrinal Period" to the present time.

THE CATECHISM REGAINS FAVOR

With the increased interest in and emphasis on the Bible, around 1820, naturally the doctrine-centered curriculum, represented in the catechism, gave way to a Bible-centered curriculum. This change, however, was gradual, for even the biblical courses, highly popular about 1825,¹ provided for the study of the ritual and church doctrines. Usually one Sunday each month was devoted to this phase of the curriculum. About 1831 the current Sunday-school lessons, known as the *Selected Lesson Scheme*,² suffered a period of unpopularity causing confusion in the religious curriculum, with the result that interest in the catechism was revived. It is probable that the Massachusetts Sunday School Society was responsible at least in part for this revival. In 1835 this society published the *Shorter Catechism* and, at a later date, a volume of exercises to accompany it, which provided paraphrases and explanatory notes of such a nature that even young children, it was thought, could comprehend them with ease.³

In 1836 this society republished the *New England Primer*, introducing this beloved old book once more into many New

¹ Consult Chapter VII for a detailed discussion of these lessons.

² *Ibid.*

³ The exact date is not recorded in the history of the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society.

England homes, as well as into many other parts of the country.⁴ The history of the Society states that some ten thousand copies were distributed in Illinois alone through the gift of one generous layman.⁵ The fact that the *New England Primer* contained the *Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Divines*, and frequently John Cotton's catechism, *Milk for Babies* (discussed in Chapter I), would indicate that the reprinting of this *Primer* gave an impetus to the renewal of interest in the catechism. In the same year (1836) the Massachusetts Society inaugurated a series of *Biblical Catechisms for Infant Sunday Schools*. This work finally grew to include eight volumes.

There were always those who firmly believed that doctrinal material should have a pre-eminent place in the religious curriculum. About 1831-1835, therefore, the catechism regained at least a certain favor for the following reasons: (1) The temporary confusion and dissatisfaction with the current biblical lessons; (2) the efforts of the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society to reinstate the catechism; and (3) a natural resurgence of a once powerful and dominant tendency. The catechism was able to hold a respectable place until about the time of the Civil War, when it began its second decline.

REPRESENTATIVE CATECHETICAL MATERIALS

The standard catechisms by Luther, Ursinus, and the Westminster Divines continued to be used. However, just as in the "Doctrinal Period" proper, when independent catechisms like the Albion were produced, so in the period of "revival" there were independent attempts to provide new catechetical material. A good example of a doctrinal catechism of this period is that of Joseph Banvard entitled *The Topical Question Book*. It was another catechism of the doctrinal type—theological, metaphysical, and formal—the lessons being immediately related to the plan of salvation.

While there were books that in their nature merely paralleled

⁴ *A Brief History of the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society and of the Rise and Progress of Sabbath Schools*, p. 16.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

the catechisms of the former period, there were also significant developments and modifications in catechetical materials. The most prominent examples of change took place in the Presbyterian and Methodist denominations. These will be noted.

A Presbyterian catechism for young children. A pedagogical improvement on the *Shorter Catechism* was attempted by James R. Boyd in a volume called *The Child's Book on the Westminster Shorter Catechism*. The primary aim of the new book was to provide an easy introduction, and help for understanding and committing to memory the *Shorter Catechism*. Several typical sections will be included here to illustrate the nature of the book and to serve as a basis of comparison with the *Shorter Catechism* itself.⁶

THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH MAN WAS MADE

Q. Who made you?

A. God.

Q. For how long a time are you to know God, and thus be happy in his favor?

A. Forever.

Therefore (1) what is man's chief end?

Man's chief end is to glorify God and be happy forever.⁷

One notices a modification here from the *Shorter Catechism*, which begins with the question, "What is the chief end of man?" and the answer, "Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever." The second question in the *Shorter Catechism* is, "What Rule hath God given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him?" The answer is, "The Word of God which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him." In the child's book, this entire section, entitled "The Rule by Which Man Is to Glorify God," includes twelve questions and answers preceding the question which we have just quoted from the *Shorter Catechism*. A few typical questions and answers are cited here. • •

Q. Does man, of himself, know how to glorify God and enjoy him?

A. He does not; he needs some *rule*, some *directions*.

Q. Has God given any such rule? Has he spoken or written to us on the subject?

⁶ The *Shorter Catechism* is discussed and evaluated on page 72ff. of the present study.

⁷ Boyd, James R., *The Child's Book on the Westminster Shorter Catechism*, pp. 7-8.

A. He has spoken or written to us all we need to know. The Bible is called the *Word of God*, because he has therein spoken to us. It is called the Scriptures, or writings, because he has therein written to us.

Q. Did God write them himself, or cause men to write them?

A. Except the Ten Commandments, which he himself wrote, all the Bible was written by good men, whom he directed and taught what to write; so that what they have written has the same authority and value as if God had himself written it.⁸

The *Shorter Catechism* contains this question and answer in regard to the Unity of God: "Q. Are there more gods than one?

A. There is but one only, the living and true God." In the *Child's Book* there are ten questions and answers which seek to explain and prove the Unity of God. Some of them are as follows:

Q. How many gods are there?

A. There is but one.

Q. Are there not other beings or things that are called gods and worshiped as such?

A. Yes a vast number, and of great variety.

Q. What names are applied to such in the Bible?

A. They are called *idols, vanity, a lie*.

Q. How is God described, in opposition to them?

A. He is described as the *only* God, as the *living* God, as the *true* God.⁹

Other sections are devoted to the principal instructions of the Holy Scriptures, the Trinity, the decrees of God, the creation of the world, the fall of man, the plan of redemption, Christ's office, justification, adoption, and sanctification. Part II deals with the duties which God requires of man, such as those contained in the Ten Commandments. Repentance and the proper use of the Word of God and of the sacraments are also treated.

This book purports to be designed for children under twelve years of age. The author indicates that on account of the usual custom of having children begin the study of the catechism under ten years of age, they often find it so difficult and uninteresting that they develop a prejudice against such a study altogether. This volume was intended to make it possible for children to understand, and thus readily to fix in the memory the great

⁸ Boyd, James R., *The Child's Book on the Westminster Shorter Catechism*, pp. 8-10.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-13.

outlines of Christian truth and duty laid down in the catechism. The writer of the volume was desirous that his book might help prepare the way for the higher appreciation and more efficient influence of the ministrations of the pulpit, of the prayer meeting, and of family worship, and lead many of the children to an early acceptance and service of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Methodist Episcopal Catechisms. As indicated in Chapter IV the Methodists in America used the *Wesleyan Catechisms* Numbers I, II, and III.

The *Journal* of the General Conference for 1840 contains this statement: "Let our catechisms be used as extensively as possible."¹⁰ This same body in 1856 has a more far-reaching statement in its *Journal*: "It shall be the duty of preachers to enforce faithfully upon parents and Sunday-school teachers the great importance of instructing children in the doctrines and duties of our holy religion, to see that our catechisms be used as extensively as possible in our Sunday schools and families, . . . and publicly catechize the children in Sunday schools and in special meetings for that purpose."¹¹ We have here in these two references a clear statement of the attitude of the Methodist Episcopal Church of this earlier period toward the catechism.

In 1848 the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church voted that a committee be appointed to examine the Methodist catechisms and determine on some sort of revision. The committee, composed of E. Hedding, N. Bangs, S. Olin, and J. Holdich, reported April 18, 1851, to the Book Committee that it had performed the task assigned to it. Catechisms Numbers I and II and specimens of Number III were submitted to the General Conference held in Boston in May, 1852. The Conference of 1852 ordered the immediate publication of Numbers I and II, and the early completion and publication of Number III.¹² An example from Number I follows:

LESSON III—MAN'S FALL AND SINFUL STATE

Q. Did our first parents continue holy and happy?

¹⁰ *Journal of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.* 1840.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 1856, p. 186.

¹² *Catechism of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, Number I, preface.

A. They sinned against God and fell into misery. Gen. III.

Q. What is sin?

A. Any transgression of the law of God. I John III: 4.

Q. What was the sin of our first parents?

A. Their eating of the forbidden fruit.

Q. By whom were they tempted to sin?

A. By the devil, in the form of a serpent. Gen. III: 13; Rev. XX: 2.

Q. What evil did their sin bring upon them?

A. They lost the image of God, were driven out of Eden, and became subject to sin and death.

Q. Did their sin harm any beside themselves?

A. "By the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." Rom. V: 18.

Q. In what state are mankind born?

A. In the image of the fallen Adam, destitute of original righteousness. Gen. V: 3.

Q. What are the miseries of this condition?

A. All mankind being born in sin, are by nature under the wrath of God.¹³

Other chapters in this catechism deal with such concepts as God, creation, salvation, means of grace, death, and judgment. In the appendix the book contains the Beatitudes, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, the Baptismal Covenant, and examples of prayers for morning and evening, for children and youth. The following is an example of a morning prayer:

Almighty God, my heavenly Father, I thank thee that thou hast taken care of me the past night, and that I am alive and well this morning. Save me, O God, from evil all this day; and may I love and serve thee always. Bestow on me, I pray thee, every good thing which I need for my body and soul; assist me by thy Holy Spirit to do thy will; make me always afraid to offend thee and let me live in thy favor, and at last be saved in heaven for Christ's sake. Amen.¹⁴

Catechism Number I, so called to distinguish it from Number II and Number III, was the official church catechism. Numbers II and III were modifications of Number I, and contained additional illustrations, instructions, elaborations, and proof texts. Number I was intended to be brief, concise, comprehensive, and systematically arranged, not only for the use of children but for adults as well. In the main the answers to the questions were brief, and stated in words suited to the compre-

¹³ *Catechism of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, Number I, pp. 12-13.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

hension of children. The material contained in the catechism was considered suitable to be memorized and to be retained for life.

It is interesting to note the way in which *Catechism Number II* seeks to add clearness of meaning to Number I. Take, for example, Lesson 3, of Number I, where one of the questions reads, "What is sin?" with the answer, "Any transgression of the law of God" (I John 3:4). Number II adds, "By the law is the knowledge of sin" (Romans III:20). "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4). "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning" (I John III:8).¹⁵ The chief variation from Number I is, therefore, the inclusion in Number II of many more Scripture references offered in proof of the answer given. In the appendix of Number II the baptismal covenant is analyzed and scriptural proofs and explanations offered. For example, the first part of the covenant, "I renounce," is dealt with in this manner: "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful work of darkness" (Ephesians 5:11). See also Proverbs 4:14, 15; II Cor. 6:14, 15.¹⁶

Catechism Number III, the last in the series, was designed for advanced study. The purpose of Numbers I and II was to condense in the briefest and simplest language all essential scriptural truths. The purpose of Number III was to expand these truths, so as to give a full treatment of the various subjects considered—the summary of the church's doctrine. *Catechism Number I* was printed in the first part of Number III, followed by expansion and explanation. For purposes of comparison let us examine Lesson III of Number III, since Lesson III was cited in the study of Volumes I and II.

Summary

LESSON III. MAN'S FALL AND SINFUL NATURE

- Q. What does the Bible teach us respecting the fall and sinful state of man?
 A. Our first parents did not continue holy and happy. Being tempted of the devil, they transgressed God's law and fell into sin and misery. By their

¹⁵ *Catechism of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, Number II, p. 18.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

disobedience, they lost the favor and image of God; they were consequently driven out of Eden, having become subject to sin and death.

Their sin not only injured themselves, but all their posterity who were individually born in the image of the fallen Adam, destitute of original righteousness, and under the wrath of God.

Analysis

Q. What doctrines are stated in this section?

- A. 1. Man's fall from holiness by voluntary sin.
 2. His subsequent misery.
 3. The universal prevalence of sin and the consequence among the descendants of Adam.

Explanatory and Practical Questions

Q. Were Adam and Eve under any necessity of yielding to the temptation and the devil?

- A. They were not; they had perfect freedom to obey or to disobey God at their own choice. . . .

Questions for Study

Does history give account of any nation or people who have been free from wars, contention and crime?

Definitions

Transgress	to pass over, to break.
Prevalence	existence and extension.
Admonish	warn.
Depravity	wickedness. ¹⁷

Since *Catechism Number III* was the last in the series, it was suggested that if the pupil expected to get the fullest benefit from its study, he should possess a thorough mastery of the questions and answers of *Catechism Number I*, and the proofs found in Number II which sustained the positions affirmed in Number III. The questions in Number III relate both to the theory and practice of religion. Definitions of difficult terms were appended to each section. The purpose of the catechism was not only to exercise the memory, but also to discipline the mind, to enlighten the understanding, and to improve the heart.¹⁸

It is recommended in the preface of Number I that the three catechisms be used in consecutive order. The pupils were urged to commit to memory the answers to the questions so that they

¹⁷ *Catechism of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, Number III, pp. 27-29.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Introduction.

could repeat them *verbatim* either in order, or when asked at random. When this had been accomplished, the next step was to commit the Scripture proofs as found in Number II. Then the pupils were ready for Number III, where they were introduced to the enlarged meanings and important applications of the truth, which although already learned, would have remained relatively ineffective without further study and elaboration.

It is obvious from the material examined, and the attitude of the churches, that the catechism still had a prominent place in the Sunday school on special days set aside for that purpose.¹⁹ We have noted the causes for a revival of interest in the catechism about 1835; which continued until near the time of the Civil War. However, we are not to conclude that the catechism regained the pre-eminent place in the curriculum that it held in the early years of the American Sunday school (1790-1815). Throughout its period of revival it was overshadowed by Sunday-school material having assigned selected lessons from the Bible.

Furthermore, it is very evident that in this period there was an attempt at grading the material, although no improvement after the earlier attempts at grading is recorded. Proof of a desire to adapt the lessons is found in the material itself. The Presbyterian Church used different catechisms for children under twelve and for those beyond that age. Mr. James R. Boyd, in the *Child's Book on the Shorter Catechism*, very clearly sets forth the idea that the most advanced catechisms were not suitable to the needs and interests of children. The Methodist Episcopal Church issued new catechisms in three volumes so as to get a certain simplification and grading, and recommended that these be used in consecutive order. The Protestant Episcopal Church²⁰ expressed itself as desiring to promote a catechism that was simple, concise, and understandable by all.

An examination of the catechetical material shows little or no

¹⁹ It is clearly stated in the *Selected Lesson Books* and *Union Question Books* of this period, that certain Sundays were set apart for catechetical instruction in the Sunday school. It will be made clear in the following chapter, how the Question Books made room for catechetical teaching. *The Child's Book on the Shorter Catechism*, Preface.

²⁰ Preface to the *Protestant Episcopal Catechism*.

improvement in method except possibly a refinement in simplification. In the fundamental aspects the method and content, as well, remained the same.

THE PERIOD OF DECLINE

Outside of the Lutheran Church with its various branches, and the Episcopal Church, there is good reason to believe that the use of the catechism in the Sunday school showed a marked decline following 1850. It is impossible to set a fixed date when this decline set in, for the practice in one Sunday school was not necessarily the standard for another. Statements culled from Sunday-school magazines and reports of Sunday-school societies of this period, however, bear testimony to the gradual decline of the catechism after the period of revival which we have just studied. A few of these statements will be noted, as indicative of the trend of the times.

Evidence of the decline. In 1857 the Methodist Sunday School Union published the following statement in its report: "In some schools the use of the catechism is unknown; in others it is only in partial use; in a few it is faithfully studied."²¹ In 1859 the *Union Magazine* for Sunday school teachers noted the general discontinuance of the use of the catechism in Sunday-school instruction.²² In 1868 the *Sunday School Teacher's Magazine*, published by the Chicago Sunday School Union, states, "It is very rare to find a Sunday school where the catechism is used at all, and more uncommon to find one where it is faithfully and persistently taught to the entire school."²³ An examination of the order of service in four representative Methodist Episcopal Sunday schools for the year 1868 reveals the fact that in only one of them was there any place for catechetical instruction, and that consisted of only one question for the day.²⁴

The *Union Magazine* was the official organ for teachers, published by the American Sunday School Union. The *Sunday*

²¹ *Official Report of the Methodist Sunday School Union*, 1857, p. 88.

²² *Union Sunday School Magazine for Sunday School Teachers*, 1859, p. 152.

²³ *The Sunday School Teacher*, vol. iii, 1868, p. 97.

²⁴ *Official Report of the American Sunday School Union for 1868*, pp. 91-95.

School Teacher's Magazine was the official organ of the Chicago Sunday School Union, a society open to all churches interested in Sunday-school advancement. The Methodist Sunday School Union was the official Sunday-school organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Therefore, upon the statements issued by one of the leading denominations, and two of the leading non-denominational organizations, we may conclude that the use of the catechism as part of the Sunday-school curriculum, suffered a rapid decline following 1855. One has only to glance back over the evidence to note that as the century advanced the decline became more and more marked.

Causes of the decline. It might be interesting and profitable to inquire into the probable causes of the decline of the catechism. It is impossible perhaps, to point out the exact causes, but the following statements most likely include the principal reasons responsible for the decline.

1. It is probable that a great movement such as the abolition of slavery would cause men to forget their doctrinal differences, and to place the emphasis upon human values. Leonard Woolsey Bacon describes the previous period (1835-1845), as one of controversy and schism in which doctrinal differences played a large part. Following 1845, when the great movement for human liberty began to take a prominent place, there was a new religious interest that tended to supplant that of doctrinal emphasis.²⁵

2. The National Sunday School Conventions of 1832, 1833, 1859, and 1869 were great nonsectarian gatherings which allowed the various denominations to see that in the Sunday-school field most of their problems were common ones and that all churches were working toward the common goal of building a better social order. A study of denominational doctrines tended to divide the denominations, but the National Sunday School Conventions introduced more of the spirit of unity and turned attention in the direction of common problems that could be solved through co-operative effort. In enumerating the causes responsible for the decline of denominational doctrines it would appear that the national conventions cannot be excluded.

²⁵ Bacon, Leonard Woolsey, *History of American Christianity*, p. 297.

3. The religious revivals just prior to the Civil War placed a new emphasis upon the study and practice of religious, social, and political duties.²⁶ In 1857 there was a widespread business depression. In that same year, Jeremiah Lanphier, who was in the employ of the Old Dutch Church, began in New York a noon meeting of prayer for business men. Other meetings were opened with noonday preaching in many places. For example, Burton's theater, on Chambers Street, in New York, was thronged with listeners to hear the truths of personal religion expounded by great preachers. Mr. Bacon thus describes the situation in New York: "Everywhere the cardinal topics of practical religious duty, repentance, and Christian faith were those of social conversation. All the churches and ministers seemed to give evidence of religious activity and hope."²⁷ What was true of New York, became true of nearly every city, village, and hamlet throughout the country.²⁸ It appears that men had been starved by the unproductiveness of doctrinal controversy and were hungry for the personal values in religion.

4. The Civil War had a religious, as well as a political, influence. The result of the great conflict was not a strengthening of sectarian emphasis but, rather, an emphasis upon Christian fellowship. Mr. Bacon has stated it well: "One religious lesson that was learned as never before on both sides of the conflict was the lesson of Christian fellowship as against the prevailing folly of sectarian division, emulation, and jealousies."²⁹

In view of the factors which we have just examined it seems only natural that the denominations should have slackened their emphasis upon the doctrines for a type of curriculum which tended more to emphasize Christian fellowship and religious duty.

The doctrinal catechism had its heyday in the early American Sunday school, its revival in the second quarter of the nineteenth century; and by the middle of the century it was entering upon its period of decline, from which it has had no revival.

²⁶ Bacon, Leonard Woolsey, *History of American Christianity*, p. 343.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 343.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 343.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 349.

PRESENT USE OF THE CATECHISM AS SUNDAY-SCHOOL CURRICULUM

It is the purpose of this part of our study to point out the place of the catechism in the present Sunday-school curriculum.

The catechism not used in most communions. In most Protestant denominations the doctrinal catechism has no place in the Sunday-school curriculum. The Disciples of Christ have no catechism.³⁰ The *Beacon Course*, used by the Unitarian Association, is not co-ordinate with the Unitarian catechism which is used in connection with membership classes.³¹ The Sunday-school literature of the Reformed Church in America is in no way correlated with the use of the catechism.³² Neither the *International Uniform Lessons* nor the *International Graded Lessons* make provision for the use of the catechism.³³ The *Departmental Graded Lessons*, authorized by the Presbyterian Church, and the *Keystone Series* used in the Baptist Church, make no use of the catechism. This is also true of the *Chicago Constructive Studies in Religion* and of the *Scribner Completely Graded Series*. This means that in most communions, the catechism has no recognized place in the curriculum of the Sunday school.³⁴

The catechism in Sunday-school material. However, in spite of these facts, the catechism is still used in the Sunday schools of some Protestant denominations. In proof of this statement

³⁰ Robert M. Hopkins, secretary of the United Christian Missionary Society, gives this information in a personal letter, February, 6, 1925.

³¹ Beacon Press, January 9, 1925. Personal letter.

³² Abram Duryee, educational secretary of the Board of Publications and Bible School work of the Reformed Church in America, gives this information in a personal letter. January 9, 1925.

³³ The *International Graded Lessons* are used chiefly by the Methodist Episcopal Church (North and South) and by the Congregational Church.

³⁴ W. F. Robertson of the Beacon Press, January 9, 1925, makes the statement: "A large number of Unitarian Church Schools use a catechism prepared by the American Unitarian Association in connection with membership classes." It would seem, therefore, that at a certain season of the year, the Sunday school made provision for the doctrinal instruction of the pupils preparing for church membership. Mr. Robertson says, further, "The literature of the Sunday school does not co-ordinate with this catechism."

Exactly the same situation exists in the Reformed Church in America. The Rev. Abram Duryee, educational secretary of the Board of Publications and Bible School Work, says, "Our Sunday school literature does not in any way co-ordinate with the use of the catechism, but the catechism is used in connection with membership classes in the Sunday school." These two instances are possibly quite typical of the practice in many of the Protestant denominations. The situation seems to be about this: If the pastor is unable to conduct a class of instruction for those expecting to unite with the church, then either he or the teacher, takes the Sunday-school lesson period for a short time previous to the date of uniting with the church, to instruct the children in the doctrines of the faith.

we shall study the curriculum of the United Lutheran Church, the Protestant Episcopal Church, and the Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and other States, as representative of those denominations whose Sunday-school materials are co-ordinated with the doctrinal catechisms of the respective churches.

(1) *The United Lutheran Church in America.* The Sunday-school literature of this communion is called *The Lutheran Graded Series*, and an examination of it reveals a slight co-ordination with the official catechism of the church. The units in the series for the younger ages make large use of the catechetical method of instruction, but only one unit, *Bible History*, bears a definite relationship to the catechism as such.

Bible History, which is designed for pupils twelve years of age, contains a section in each lesson entitled, "What the Catechism says," followed by a quotation or a paraphrase of a portion of Luther's *Small Catechism*. The excerpt from the Catechism is but a small section of the entire lesson. The following illustration will serve to indicate the place of the catechism in this one unit of the Lutheran curriculum:

BIBLE HISTORY

Fourth Sunday

The Saviour Labors About the Sea of Galilee.

The Scripture to be Learned.

Whom the Physician will Heal.

"They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick; I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Mark 2: 17.

The Only Teacher for Our Soul.

"I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me." John 14: 6.

The First Business of Our Life.

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. 6: 33.

What the Catechism Says.

"I believe that Jesus Christ has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, secured and delivered me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil." [This is taken from the second article of the creed.]

"History of What Happened About Capernaum and Nazareth." In this section, the events are gathered around the following topics:

Heals nobleman's son.
Preaches at Nazareth.
Preaches out of a boat.
Drives out an evil spirit.
Heals Peter's wife's mother.
Heals the sick in Capernaum.
Goes about all Galilee.

Summary of Events

Jesus returns from Jericho through Samaria.
He is received with honor in Galilee.
He preaches and teaches there.
He heals a nobleman's son at Cana.
He is rejected at Nazareth.

Dr. Paul Heisey describes the present practice within the Lutheran Church in this manner: "The *Lutheran Graded Series* utilizes the catechism in its general form, in only one volume, *Bible History*, but selections from the catechism (the Commandments, Lord's Prayer, and Creed) appear in *Wonderland*. [This volume is designed for the second grade of the Primary Department.] The catechetical method, however, is followed by the Lutheran Church together with the modern Sunday-school efforts. At present, two distinct systems of religious education prevail in the United Lutheran Church; the Sunday school for general religious education and the catechetical class for those preparing for membership in the church. . . . The Literature of the United Lutheran church containing the *International Uniform Lessons* has small portions of the catechism for each Sunday."³⁵

(2) *The Protestant Episcopal Church*. The Protestant Episcopal Church has a series of graded textbooks called the *Christian Nurture Series* which at points utilize the Church's Catechism.

The *Christian Nurture Series* presents material for fourteen grades, or programs of Christian instruction and training for the children of the church from four to eighteen years of age. It is prepared for the use of parents in homes and of teachers in schools and is designed to show how the baptismal pledge may be fulfilled by the right selection and adaptation of the material from the

³⁵ Heisey, Paul H., *Lutheran Graded Series of Sunday School Materials*, p. 8.

Bible, Prayer Book, Church Doctrine, Church History, and Missions, according to the needs of the child in his various stages of interest and development.³⁶ From this description one would expect to find selections and adaptations of church doctrines throughout the series. Such is actually the case. Only one of the units, Course VI, is built specifically around the catechism. It is for children nine to ten years of age, or about grade four of the public schools. Before we examine the examples which show the use made of the catechism in the *Christian Nurture Series* we shall give brief consideration to the catechism of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

The catechism of this denomination is divided into five parts, (a) Holy Baptism, (b) the Creed, (c) the Commandments, (d) the Lord's Prayer, and (e) the Sacraments.

(a) Holy Baptism.³⁷ Holy Baptism is regarded as the mode of entrance into God's family, the church, and is looked upon as a covenant with God.

- [1] Q. What is your name?
A. N. or M.
- [2] Q. Who gave you this name?
A. My sponsors in Baptism; wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven.
- [3] Q. What did your sponsors then for you?
A. They did promise and vow three things in my name:
First, that I should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomp and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh;
Secondly, that I should believe all the articles of the Christian faith;
And Thirdly, that I should keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life.
- [4] Q. Dost thou not think that thou art bound to believe, and to do, as they have promised for thee?
A. Yes, verily; and by God's help so I will; And I heartily thank our Heavenly Father, that he hath called me to this state of salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour: And I pray unto God to give me his grace, that I may continue in the same unto my life's end.

(b) The Creed. The Creed is considered the body of the foundation of God's Church and the essence of the Christian faith.

³⁶ *Christian Nurture Series. Trust in God*, p. xv.

³⁷ The parts of the catechism quoted here were selected from the *Church Catechism*, published by the Protestant Episcopal Tract Society, New York, 1840.

- [5] A. Catechist, rehearse the articles of thy belief.
 A. [Here follows the Apostles' Creed].
- [6] Q. What dost thou chiefly learn in these Articles of thy belief?
 A. First I learn to believe in God the Father, who hath made me and all the world.
 Secondly, in God the Son, who hath redeemed me, and all mankind.
 Thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me and all the people of God.

(c) The Commandments. The commandments are regarded as the work of God's Church, or the Christian duties of believers. The first four sum up our duty to God and the remainder sum up our duty toward man. The "Explanation" of the Commandments is cited here.

- [7] Q. What dost thou chiefly learn by these commandments?
 A. I learn two things; my duty toward God, and my duty toward my neighbor.
- [8] Q. What is thy duty toward God?
 A. My duty toward God is,
 to believe in him;
 to fear him,
 and to love him.
 with all my heart,
 with all my mind,
 with all my soul, and
 with all my strength;
 to worship him;
 to give him thanks;
 to put my whole trust in him;
 to call upon him;
 To honor his holy
 Name and his word;
 And to serve him truly,
 all the days of my life.
- [9] Q. What is thy duty toward thy neighbor?
 A. My duty toward my neighbor is,
 to love him as myself, and to do to all men as
 I would they should do unto me:
 To love, honor, and succor my father and mother:
 To honor and obey the civil authority:
 To submit myself to all my governors, teachers,
 spiritual pastors and masters:
 To order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters:
 To hurt nobody by word or deed:
 To be true and just in all my dealings:
 To bear no malice nor hatred in my heart:
 To keep my hands from picking and stealing,

And my tongue from evil speaking, lying, and
slandering:
To keep my body in temperance, soberness and chastity:
Not to covet nor desire other men's goods;
but to learn and labor truly to get mine own living,
and to do my duty in that state of life unto which it
shall please God to call me.

(d) The Lord's Prayer. In the section on the Lord's Prayer, which comes next, the pupil is expected to memorize the prayer and the explanation of it. It is pointed out in the explanation that the pupil should pray for grace, things needful for soul and body, mercy, forgiveness of sins, and a shielding from sin and wickedness.

(e) Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The latter part of the catechism concerns itself with the sacraments—Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

[10] Q. How many sacraments hath Christ ordained in his church?

A. Two only, as generally necessary to salvation; that is to say,
Baptism, and
The Supper of the Lord.

[11] Q. What meanest thou by this word *Sacrament*?

A. I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us; ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we received the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.

In the section on Baptism the thought is stressed that water is the outward form but that the inward grace is a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness. Persons who are baptised are required to repent and forsake their sins and have faith in the promises of God.

In the section on the Lord's Supper it is pointed out that the sacrament is a continual remembrance of the sacrifice and the death of Christ, and the benefits which we receive thereby. The outward sign of the Lord's Supper is bread and wine, while the inward significance is that the body and blood of Christ are spiritually received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper.

An examination of the several units of the series reveals the fact that selections from the catechism are woven in with the memory work of the various lessons, although not all of the

memory work is selected from the catechism. In fact, the memory selections are taken from the Bible and even from literature, as well as from the catechism.³⁸ To make this point clear, let us take the table of correlations for the unit *Trust in God*, which is designed for pupils about six years of age.³⁹

1st Sunday after Trinity. "This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it." Psalm 118: 24.

2nd Sunday after Trinity. "I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of Heaven and earth." Apostles' Creed.

5th Sunday after Trinity. "Call upon me in the day of trouble." Psalms 50: 15.

8th Sunday after Trinity. "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth." The Apostles' Creed.

3rd Sunday in Advent. "And in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary." Apostles' Creed.

4th Sunday in Advent. "A Christmas Carol."

and Sunday after Christmas. "Little children everywhere come from near and far, to their loving Saviour, guided by his star." Hetty Lee.

This is a fair sample of the memory work of one unit, and it shows how the selections from the catechism,⁴⁰ are interlaced with the other memory passages. Exactly the same plan is carried out in the second and third grades except that there are no selections from literature.⁴¹

For pupils in the fourth grade (ages 9 to 10 years) the *Christian Nurture Series* makes definite use of the catechism. The manual for this age is called *God's Great Family*, and a quotation from its introduction describes its point of view and suggests the content.

This course, coming at about the age of nine, gathers up the gains of the preceding years and applies them, as a kind of climax, to the child's survey of the missionary activity of the church. Child-life in different lands is brought out in simple story form to show how the church, with her message, is meeting the needs of men. . . . In connection with the missionary stories, the catechism is reviewed or learned, and the structure of the child's devotional life is carried forward.⁴²

The purpose of this course is twofold. On the one hand, it forms a climax

³⁸ This is apparent from personal examination.

³⁹ *Trust in God*. Revision of 1924.

⁴⁰ The Creed, Commandments and Lord's Prayer are a part of the catechism.

⁴¹ *Christian Nurture Series*, Second Grade: *Obedience to God*; Third grade: *God with Man*.

⁴² *God's Great Family*, p. xi.

of Christian helpfulness, applying the motives taught in the preceding courses to a definite interest in the child life of the great world. On the other hand, it accomplishes the word-for-word learning of the catechism and shows by practical illustration from child life what the need is for Christian living among those who have it not.⁴³

Turning to the "Table of Correlations" in this unit where the memory work is correlated with the informational, doctrinal, and service activities, one finds that the actual questions and answers of the Anglican Catechism are listed. Even in this unit, not all of the memory passages are from the catechism, though most of them are. A few examples are noted here.

Third Sunday After Trinity

Q. What is your name?

A. (Full Christian name).

Q. Who gave you this name?

A. My sponsors in Baptism, when I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven. [Catechism.]

Fifth Sunday After Trinity

Q. What did your sponsors then for you?

A. They did promise and vow three things in my name:
First, that I should renounce. . . . of the flesh.

Tenth Sunday After Trinity

Review catechism from the beginning.

Eleventh Sunday After Trinity

The Creed.

It is interesting to note in this volume that the learning of the catechism is correlated with illustrations of child life, which have a distinct missionary or social service appeal. Perhaps there is no better way to make this clear than to present the outline of one of the lessons.

5TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

II. Indians

Naming the Indian Baby: Swift Arrow

Aim. To help boys and girls realize that Indian children need to know that our Lord Jesus loves them and wants them to be his followers, or Christians.

⁴³ *God's Great Family*, p. xxvi.

Material Correlated

Informational.

Naming an Indian Child.

Picture: An Indian Baby.

Memory Work.

What did your sponsors then for you? They did promise and vow three things in my name: First, that I should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh. [Catechism.]

Church Loyalty.

Explain Board of Missions.

Devotional Life.

Class Prayer.

Christian Service.

Mission Work.

Directions to Teacher. The teacher is given various directions as to reading and thought. On this Sunday the teacher is to tell the class of the work to be done for an Indian mission. She is informed that the lessons for the ensuing eight weeks have a direct relation to the Board of Missions and that all other work should be made secondary.

Review. In this section, the teacher is assisted in selecting the most valuable things from the last lesson for re-emphasis. The part which concerns the catechism is noted here:

How many blessings are received with the Christian name in Baptism? (Three blessings) (Draw diagram on blackboard). What is the first blessing? Second? Third?
(Write each answer on the diagram in proper order, then recite together the memory work of the last Sunday.)

THE STORY

In the southwestern part of this country is a little village where some Indians live. The village has no streets or houses, but just a few tepees scattered around the trees. In front of each tepee a big iron kettle is hung on three short poles, over a pile of stones. This is the family cookstove, where the Indian mother cooks a hot meal every day. If the children are hungry at other times, they eat dried corn, nuts, or a piece of dried meat.

In front of one of the tepees, an Indian mother sat under a tree. Her little baby was wrapped in a deer-skin and strapped flat on his back to the cradle. The Indian mother was making a tiny coat out of skins while her husband sat nearby making arrows.

This Indian village was so far away that no white people had ever been here. The Indians had never heard about God, our heavenly Father, and his blessed Son, Jesus Christ. Nothing was known about the Bible or the church.

These Indians were afraid of a Great Spirit. So when there was a heavy storm with thunder and lightning, they said the Great Spirit was angry and was scolding them. They were always afraid and never knew what dreadful thing the Great Spirit would do next. What did they need most? (A missionary.)

The Indian mother was talking to her husband, and she said: "What shall we name our baby? He is old enough to have a name." "Whatever pleases you most—that shall be his name," replied the father; "look around you." The mother looked at the trees and the birds and finally her eyes came back to the arrows made by her husband.

"The Arrow!" she cried. "The arrow is swift and straight, and strong. Our baby shall be named Swift Arrow, and he shall be swift and straight and strong!"

A great feast was prepared. The fire was lighted, and when the feast was ready the Indian men and women in bright blankets, feathers, and beads, sat in a circle around the iron kettle and ate the steaming food. The Indian men smoked the "peace pipe," and while the Indian baby slept quietly in his birch-bark cradle, he was given his Indian name, "Swift Arrow."

When each one of us received, in Baptism, the Christian name, the sign of the Cross and the three blessings, the promise was made that we would try to be like our Lord Jesus Christ, loving, faithful, obedient; the little Indian baby was only to try to be like a wooden arrow."

EXPRESSIONAL WORK

When we received three blessings at our Baptism, our sponsors made three promises. The question is asked, "What did your sponsors do for you in Baptism?" The answer is: "They did promise and vow three things in my name: First, that I should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh." Renounce means "to give up." "The works of the devil" are anger, swearing, hatred, stealing, lying, murder, and trying to make others sin. We must give them up. "Pomps and vanity" are showy, worldly things that keep us from thinking about God. We must give them up. "Sinful lusts of the flesh" are the wrong things which the body does, e. g., eating too much, drinking hurtful drinks, sleeping too long, are some of them. We must give them up. (Write on blackboard) "Renounce means to give up all that is wrong."

Let us all say the first promise. "First, that I should renounce," etc. (Drill on this answer.)

I am going to tell you how the church plans and carries on the mission work.

The Board of Missions asks the people to give money so that priests, teachers, doctors, and nurses may be sent to these members of God's family to make them Christians. Churches are needed, prayers and workers are needed, in order that God's work for his family may go on.

All the money put in our Lenten boxes is given to this Board of Missions and the Board sends some of the money to the Indians.

EXTENSION WORK

Begin work for an Indian mission and the making of the Indian village.

HOME WORK

Answers to these questions are to be written on the pupils' leaflets.

Do you know:

1. Why these Indians had never heard of God?
2. What the Indian baby was named for?
3. Why did he not receive a Christian name?
4. What your sponsors did for you when you received your Christian name?
5. What is meant by the Board of Missions?

One gets the idea in studying this lesson, which is typical of the whole book, that an attempt is being made to carry two systems along together—catechetical instruction and missionary training. One has a feeling that the correlation between doctrinal information and the missionary appeal is forced and artificial rather than psychological. The makers of the *Christian Nurture Series* are to be commended for attempting to make the catechism interesting, if it must be given to children nine and ten years of age, but in this book there appears to be a forced correlation between it and missionary stories.

We have already noted how the preceding units contained memory passages which are a part of the church's catechism. The same is true also of those units which follow it. For example, take Course XII, for children ten and eleven years of age:

Second Sunday in Advent

1st Section of the Apostles' Creed.

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Answer to "Why was the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ordained?"

First Sunday after Easter

The Creed reviewed.

Fourth Sunday after Easter

Catechism answer, following the creed.

In conclusion, the *Christian Nurture Series* does correlate with the church's catechism. The unit for children nine and ten years old called, *God's Great Family*, is calculated to accomplish the word-for-word learning of the catechism. The preceding units contain selections from the Commandments, the Lord's Prayer

and the Creed which are a part of the catechism, and the units which follow *God's Great Family* contain selections from the catechism so that the pupils will retain it.

(3) *The Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and other States.* In this branch of the Lutheran Church a large place is given to the use of the catechism in the Sunday-school material. An examination of the Sunday-school literature makes this clear.

(a) The Primary Department. The material for this department is called, *Graded Memory Course for Evangelical Lutheran Sunday Schools. Part One.* A few sentences from the preface will introduce us to the book.

The memory material contained in this pamphlet covers a two-years' course for the *Primary Department* of a Sunday school and is designed for children of the ages of five and six years, respectively. The material has been selected and arranged according to the sequence of difficulty, except under *Review*, a summary of all previously learned material, the logical order has been followed.

During the first year all the memory work must be done by drill of the teacher, who speaks the line or the short-thought unit, and the pupils repeat the same individually and in concert. Here the teacher must speak slowly and plainly with painfully exact enunciation; for the child's response will be the echo of the teacher's presentation. Careful and exact memorizing is absolutely essential, and the teacher is responsible for it.

The key to successful memorizing is *systematic repetition*. It is a sad mistake on the part of the teacher to regard review lessons as a waste of time. Diligent review is a necessity, and the limited amount of subject matter selected for the first year will make frequent repetition possible.

During the second year also most of the work will have to be done by drill. Perhaps toward the end of the term some pupils will be able to read well enough to help themselves along to some extent. However, this pamphlet should be given into the hands of all primary pupils, so that parents at home have an opportunity to assist their little ones and to aid the teacher.

In the preface we have the method that is used in this department clearly set forth. It is a *memory* course and stories have no part in it. The course embraces memory work from the catechism, prayers before meals, after meals, evening prayers, prayers in sickness, Scripture quotations, and hymns.

In the work for the first year, intended for five-year-old children, the only memory work taken from the catechism⁴⁴ is the

⁴⁴ Luther's *Small Catechism* is the official catechism.

Lord's Prayer, which is the "Third Chief Part" of Luther's *Small Catechism*.⁴⁵

The six-year-old children, who are expected to study the second year of the course, memorize the first two articles of the Creed, a part of the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, and the Ten Commandments. A note calls attention to the fact that the third article of the Creed, which begins, "I believe in the Holy Ghost," will be taken later in the course. The section chosen from "The Sacrament of Holy Baptism" is quoted here.

Christ, our Lord, says in the last chapter of Mark: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

The remainder of the year is devoted to a review of the catechism, the prayers, Scripture quotations, and hymns. It might be noted in passing that this order of memorization is followed throughout the entire memory course.

(b) The Junior Department. The pupils in the Junior Department, ages seven and eight, memorize Part Two of the *Graded Memory Course*. The seven-year-old pupils memorize the *Third Article of The Creed* and the questions and answers which relate to the commandments up to and including the Eighth Commandment, and further questions and answers on Baptism. Some examples are noted here:

FIRST YEAR CATECHISM

The Third Article

"I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

NOTE: The semicolons in the above indicate the thought units and should be carefully observed by teacher and pupils."

The First Commandment

Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear, love and trust in God above all things.

The Second Commandment

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain.

What does this mean?

⁴⁵ The six chief parts of Luther's *Small Catechism* are: The Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, the Office of the Keys, and the Sacrament of the Altar.

Answer: We should fear and love God that we may not curse, swear, use witchcraft, lie, or deceive by his name, but call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks.

The Third Commandment

Thou shalt sanctify the holy day.

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear and love God that we may not despise preaching and his word, but hold it sacred, and gladly hear and learn it.

Baptism

What is baptism?

Baptism is not simple water only, but it is the water comprehended in God's command and connected with God's word.

Which Is That Word of God?

Christ, our Lord, says in the last chapter of Matthew: "Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

What Does Baptism Give or Profit?

It works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare.⁴⁶

The eight-year-old pupils memorize the catechetical questions on the ninth and tenth commandment, an explanation of the first article of the Creed, a part of "The Office of the Keys" which is the fifth chief part of the *Small Catechism*, and a part of the "Sacrament of the Altar" which is the sixth part of the catechism. The questions and answers on the commandment are exactly of the same nature as those previously quoted for the seven-year-olds. The excerpts from the two last chief parts of the catechism are as follows:

The Office of the Keys

Thus writes the holy Evangelist John, Chapter twentieth: The Lord Jesus breathed on his disciples, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever's sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever's sins ye retain, they are retained.

The Sacrament of the Altar

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the same night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it and gave it to his disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me.

After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, gave

⁴⁶ Graded Memory Course, Part Two, pp. 2-4.

thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Take, drink ye all of it; this cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you for the remission of sins. This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

(c) The Intermediate Department. The memory material for this department also covers a two years' course and is designed for children of the ages nine and ten years.⁴⁷

The work for the first year (age nine) consists of the explanation of the Second Article of the Creed and the explanation of the Third Chief Part (the Lord's Prayer), together with the usual prayers, Scripture selections, and hymns to be memorized.

In the work of the second year the ten-year-old pupils, as far as the catechism is concerned, study the explanation of the Lord's Prayer, if for any reason it was omitted in the previous year, and the remaining explanation of baptism. We have noted illustrations from the "Creed" and "Holy Baptism" but none from the "Third Chief Part." The explanation of the Fourth Petition of the Lord's Prayer is typical of all the others. (Taken from the Third Chief Part.)

THE LORD'S PRAYER

The Fourth Petition

Give us this day our daily bread.

What does this mean?

Answer: God gives daily bread indeed without our prayer, also to all the wicked; but we pray in this petition that he would lead us to know it, and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.

What, then, is meant by daily bread?

Answer: Everything that belongs to the support and wants of the body, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, field, cattle, money, goods, a pious spouse, pious children, pious servants, pious and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, discipline, honor, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like.⁴⁸

When the Lutheran child finishes this memory course, he is given a course of special instruction by the pastor which is a continuation of the fundamental work of the ages five to ten. In this special course the *Small Catechism* is thoroughly explained and much more biblical material is memorized. This special instruction completes the child's preparation for confirmation.

⁴⁷ *Graded Memory Course*, Part Three, Intermediate Department, preface.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

(d) The Senior Department. This department embraces the years eleven to fourteen inclusive. The Sunday-school curriculum for these ages consists of Bible history and story. At the close of the lesson material for each Sunday is an assignment of memory work which recalls the study of the catechism made in the previous departments. For example, Lesson 14 (Palm Sunday, April 5, 1925) has as the memory work, *The Third Article* without explanation. The memory work for Lesson 15 (Easter Sunday, April 12, 1925) includes the explanation of *The Third Article*. For Lesson 17 (Second Sunday after Easter, April 26, 1925) the memory work consists of a careful review of all the three articles without explanation. This plan is carried throughout the course.

From these facts it is very evident that this branch of the Lutheran Church attempts a distinct correlation between the Sunday-school curriculum and the church catechism, making a specific provision for the child to commit, understand, and retain the catechism. This is accomplished through a system of drill and repetition covering a period of nine or ten years.

The method used is similar to that of one hundred years ago except that a system has been worked out whereby the selections from the catechism have been arranged according to the sequence of difficulty. Fundamentally, however, now as then, it is a question of repetition, memory, and explanation.

SUMMARY

In this chapter we have studied the place of the catechism in the Sunday-school curriculum, and have noted the fact that it held a pre-eminent place until 1815 or 1820, when it was supplanted by the Bible. About 1825 the memorizing fashion gave place to lessons based more directly on the Bible than the catechism had been. Owing to the confusion within Sunday schools, a lull in the popularity of the biblical material, and a natural reaction, the catechism enjoyed a revival of favor from about 1832 to about 1855. Then came the period of its decline within most denominations as better systems of biblical lessons were developed. A study of the present situation reveals the

fact that the Sunday-school curriculum of most denominations does not have any co-ordination with the catechism. The outstanding exceptions are the Protestant Episcopal and Lutheran Churches.

A close study reveals a certain sameness in all of the catechisms regardless of their names or their own peculiar method of approach. The treatments may vary in a limited degree, but fundamentally the catechisms are the same, for they are composed of abstract doctrines and beliefs that defy simplification to the point where children may use them profitably. The concepts are entirely too difficult and too far removed from their life problems and should have no place in the curriculum intended for small children. However, because the denominations have had the conviction that children must be drilled in the doctrines of the faith, the catechism has held the place in the Sunday-school curriculum that has been indicated here.

REFERENCES ON THE CATECHISM

- Bacon, Leonard Woolsey, *History of American Christianity*.
Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia, Volume II.
Encyclopaedia Britannica, Volume V.
New International Encyclopaedia, Volume IV.
Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union*.

CHAPTER VI

THE TRANSITION TO A BIBLE-CENTERED
CURRICULUM

THE present chapter undertakes (1) to point out the factors responsible for the increased emphasis upon and use of the Bible as a source of curriculum material, (2) to discuss the misuse of the Bible by the method of unrestricted memorization, and (3) to consider the dissatisfaction resulting from such a use of the Bible.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT UPON
THE USE OF CURRICULUM MATERIAL

As indicated in Chapter V of this study, the materials and method of religious instruction for the first decade, and a little more, of the nineteenth century were catechetical. The Bible was also employed in the early American Sunday schools, though not usually in any systematic manner. John R. Sampey in the *International Lesson System*¹ states that the era of memorizing Scripture began very early in the nineteenth century, and that for about ten or fifteen years prior to the use of the *Parmelee questions* in 1823, the chief exercise of Sunday-school pupils was the repetition of Scripture verses. The reports of the New York Sunday School Society and of the American Sunday School Union (about 1825), and the preface to the *Union Questions* (published in 1829) indicate clearly that unrestricted memorization of biblical material constituted the system of Sunday-school instruction then in vogue.

At this point one may well ask the question. Why did the Bible come to receive so much attention in the religious curriculum in the early years of the new century? The factors responsible

¹ P. 19. Fleming H. Revell Company, publishers.

for this increased interest in Bible study must be traced back into the eighteenth century.

The revival in England. The English Evangelical Movement of the eighteenth century which sprang from the period dominated by rationalism was due chiefly to the influence of John Wesley,² who placed great emphasis upon the Bible. The rationalists had found their authority in the sufficiency of human reason, but the evangelicals, hostile to the prevailing rationalism³ of the age, appealed to the Bible, the infallible Word of God, as their supreme authority.

In this connection, Arthur C. McGiffert says: "In evangelicalism the significance of the Bible as a divine revelation, authenticated the orthodox faith over against deism and skepticism. Interpreted evangelically, it was made a doctrinal and moral authority of the most binding character. To venture to criticize its statements, to question its authority, to raise doubt as to the authenticity of any part, to set one's judgment above it, to treat it as in any way ill-adapted to present conditions, all this was unthinkable to a genuine evangelical."⁴ McGiffert states that John Wesley was so fully in accord with this view of the Bible that he refused to accept the Copernican theory of astronomy because he could not reconcile it with the Bible.⁵ John W. Prince, in his recent study (1926) of *Wesley on Religious Education*,⁶ is of the opinion that Wesley accepted the hypothesis of Copernicus and Isaac Newton with reference to the solar system. Doctor Prince indicates, however, that there is no evidence that Wesley attempted to harmonize the scientific hypothesis of Copernicus and the biblical theory of astronomy. There may exist some question as to Wesley's exact views with reference to the solar system, but certainly there can be no doubt that Wesley, along with other English evangelicals, regarded the Scripture as a pre-eminent authority as a rule of faith and conduct.

² McGiffert, Arthur C., *Protestant Thought Before Kant*, p. 162.

³ The rationalistic school tended to stress the natural worth and ability of man, both intellectual and moral. According to the evangelicals this was a foe to be defeated, if Christianity was to lay hold of the heart and lives of men. McGiffert, Arthur C., *Protestant Thought Before Kant*, p. 164.

⁴ McGiffert, Arthur C., *Protestant Thought Before Kant*, p. 172.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

⁶ P. 41.

The revival spirit spreading to America. The Wesleyan preachers and missionaries became active in America during the last quarter of the eighteenth century, and were destined to occupy the leading place in the revivals of religion, which culminated shortly after the beginning of the nineteenth century.⁷

In 1787 the Methodists took a leading part in a successful revival in the southern part of Virginia,⁸ and the following year (1788) was also marked by extensive revivalistic efforts largely under Methodist influences.⁹ Mr. Nathan Bangs helps to make the situation clear by describing how one, a Mr. Garrettson of Vermont, on his way through the country, informed the people concerning the activities of the Methodist preachers. He said that these preachers were working everywhere in the sections through which he had traveled, and that the report was being circulated, and was believed by some, that these preachers had been sent to America by the king of England to "disaffect" the colonists toward their new government. This was considered by the people to be the immediate cause of another war. Mr. Garrettson said that he found others who believed that the preachers were a flying army of false prophets, to whom Jesus referred as those who would come in the last days, and deceive, if possible, the very elect. Mr. Garrettson also found that the settled clergy were apprehensive lest the new preachers should break up their congregations and deprive them of a living.¹⁰

Great revivals of religion throughout the United States marked the beginning of the nineteenth century. By this time the pioneers were moving westward into the vast regions beyond the mountains. They were followed, and in some instances accompanied, by the Methodist circuit rider, and the Presbyterian and Baptist missionaries. It soon became evident that itinerant preachers could conduct series of meetings at central points in the scattered settlements of the frontier with greater economy of time and with more effective results than could be obtained

⁷ Rowe, H. K., *The History of Religion in the United States*, p. 63.

Bangs, Nathan, *A History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, vol. i, p. 253.

⁸ Mode, Peter G., *The Frontier Spirit in American Christianity*, p. 52.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 267.

¹⁰ Bangs, Nathan, *A History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, vol. i, pp. 270-271.

through the scattered efforts of resident clergy. Here, then, is the genesis of the camp meeting, which seemed to offer a solution to the religious needs of the frontier. The camp meeting was easily adjusted to the itinerant system of Methodism, and filled a large place in the religious life of the frontier. Even in a more settled and conservative section, such as New England, the camp meetings, under Methodist supervision, had a cordial welcome.¹¹

It seems safe to say that the Methodist itinerant preachers were the most important factors in the great revival movement of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The Presbyterian Church had come to stress an intellectual autocracy which did not meet the needs of real life.¹² The Baptists in the West became extreme in their opposition to education as a preparation for the ministry, and thus made impossible the trained leadership that they might have had.¹³ The Protestant Episcopal Church, carrying with it many of the English traditions, reminded the new nation too much of England and was hated with a zeal that amounted to fanaticism. The Methodists in America from the very first had made the revival an important feature and had laid great stress on a personal religion, which was to be felt as well as believed.¹⁴

The great revivals of this early period centered around the camp meeting. The Great Revival of 1800 started in Logan County, Kentucky,¹⁵ under the influence of a Presbyterian minister by the name of McGready. As has been suggested, the Methodist itinerant system was naturally well adapted to the camp-meeting revival. Consequently, Methodism profited much by the great revivals of 1800 and 1801.¹⁶ In the first place, its membership was greatly increased. In the second place, it began, as never before in its American history, to enjoy the

¹¹ Mode, Peter G., *The Frontier Spirit in American Christianity*, p. 55.

¹² Cleveland, Catherine, *The Great Revival in the West*, p. 48.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

¹⁴ Those wishing to read further on the great revival movement of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries may consult Mode, Peter, G., *The Frontier Spirit in American Christianity* and Cleveland, Catherine, *The Great Revival in the West*.

¹⁵ Cleveland, Catherine, *The Great Revival in the West*, p. 54.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

respect of the people in whom the fear had been in large measure allayed that Methodist preachers had been sent to "disaffect" the people and to cause another war with England.

In view of the fact that the Methodists laid such great stress upon the Bible, representing (according to McGiffert) the spirit and thought of the English evangelicals, and since the Bible came to be used more extensively in the Sunday schools following the revivals, it seems reasonable to assume that the renewal of interest in the Bible must have been a direct outgrowth of the revivals, in which the Bible-reading Methodists played such a prominent part. In this connection Arthur C. McGiffert says, "The evangelical spirit and thought spread to America and became felt not only in Wesleyan communions which were the direct fruit of English Methodism, but in other communions."¹⁷ In another connection Mr. McGiffert says: "It is due to evangelical influences and not to scholasticism or to the Protestantism of the Reformation period that the authority of the Scriptures has meant so much to the English and American churches of modern times."¹⁸

THE MEMORITER METHOD OF BIBLE STUDY

There are probably two reasons why the memoriter method of Bible study was used when the Bible was given pre-eminent place in the religious curriculum. First, the Bible is not a graded book, adapted to the needs and interests of various ages. It was not the purpose of biblical writers to prepare material for immediate teaching use. Second, the commonly accepted method of learning in the schools of that period was that of memorization.¹⁹ These two considerations make it seem altogether natural that when children of that day studied the Bible they should employ the memoriter method, and, further, that in the absence of definite assignments, they should be guided largely by whim, or personal preference.

¹⁷ McGiffert, Arthur C., *Protestant Thought Before Kant*, p. 178.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

¹⁹ *The Fourth Official Report of the New York Sunday School Union* emphasizes the same idea in these words: "To this end, great economy is afforded to the learners, to impress on their memories the contents of the sacred volume and suitable explanations communicated, with a trust, that at least at some future time, they may be blessed by the Holy Spirit, to their immediate good."

Unsupervised memorization. No definite assignments were made for the children. They were simply encouraged to memorize as many verses as possible to be recited each Sunday. No restrictions or suggestions were made; the child selected verses as he pleased from the entire Bible. This method in itself was unwholesome, but, worse still, the quantity of material mastered was more esteemed than the quality of the selection because of an artificial stimulation by prizes and rewards. Pupils memorized an almost unbelievable number of verses. Some quotations from descriptions bearing on the period will illustrate how the plan operated, or, rather, how it was abused.

Frederick Packard says: "The amount of Scripture memorized varied with the strength of the memory. It was not an uncommon thing for children of tender age to commit whole chapters to memory, and their achievement in this particular was reported with much ostentation."²⁰ The New York Sunday School Union includes the following in one of its reports: "Almost innumerable verses, chapters, and even whole books have been committed to memory by the learners and recited in the schools. Several instances are known of individual boys having repeated thirty or forty chapters comprising entire Gospels or Epistles, at one time. Some schools report an average of nearly five thousand verses of Scripture committed per quarter, or nearly twenty thousand in the course of a year, besides hymns, sketches of sacred history, and ordinary lessons."²¹ The fourth annual report of the society indicates the emphasis placed on the memory method. "In many schools, individuals ten or twelve years of age have committed to memory, in a single quarter, from 800 to 1,350 verses, and an amount of 18,859 verses has been recited in one school during the past year. In another instance, a boy of seven years has recited 1,003 verses in eight weeks, and a boy of eleven years, 400 verses in six weeks."²²

Prizes and rewards. There was an interesting system of rewards and penalties in these early schools. The rewards con-

²⁰ Packard, Frederick Adolphus, *Popular Sketch of the Rise of Sunday Schools in the United States*.

²¹ *Third Annual Report of the New York Sunday School Union*, May 11th, 1819, p. 7.

²² *Fourth Annual Report of the New York Sunday School Union*, May, 1820.

sisted of tickets containing passages of Scripture printed on red and blue pasteboard. In the classes for beginners a blue ticket was given to the child for punctual attendance and good behavior. In the intermediate classes (those next above the beginners) each pupil who was present at roll call received a blue ticket, and for each hymn recited another ticket. In the advanced classes all rewards were placed upon a mastery of the lesson. Here the scholars received a blue ticket for every six verses recited, and for every page of catechism memorized there was a similar reward. Six blue tickets were equal in value to one red ticket. The red tickets each had the value of half a cent and were redeemable each quarter in religious books and tracts which were thought to be suited to the needs and capacities of the child.

In this connection the first volume of the *Union Questions* comments as follows upon the method employed prior to the *Union Questions* (1829 and following): "Encouragement was held out, at the same time, to long lessons, by paying the scholars at a fixed rate for the quantity committed to memory, and more attention was necessarily given to the space gone over than to the real improvement of the scholar."²³

Penalties as well as rewards were used. Pupils in the advanced classes forfeited a blue ticket for each absence at roll call and suffered a similar penalty if unable to recite a lesson. If the pupil absented himself without a proper excuse from the morning or afternoon session of the school, he forfeited another ticket, and for improper behavior in church, still another. The pupils in the lower classes of the school suffered similar penalties for absences, and if they were guilty of bad behavior in either church or school.

Limitations of this type of Bible study. It is evident that this early method of Bible study used in the Sunday school was open to serious limitations, some of which are listed here.

1. The fact that the number of pupils in the class was necessarily very small practically precluded all social participation and the stimulus which should result from such an exercise. In

²³ *Union Questions*, vol. i, preface.

a system of study where the pupils recited, on an average, a hundred verses a session, it was imperative that only a few pupils be allotted to a given teacher.

2. The memory was exercised but the reason and judgment were not stimulated. The memorizing of Bible verses was engaged in not for the purpose of helping the pupil to acquire material that would be helpful to him in meeting life situations, but, rather, for the purpose of cramming his head with a sufficient number of verses to justify the award of tickets which could be exchanged for books. The mastery of the material was not an end in itself but a means to an end. The assimilation of the lesson so that it might be built into the character and personality of the pupil was of secondary consideration. The rewards spurred the pupils on far more than the actual truths that were to be gained. Children worked for prizes rather than for the understanding of the lesson.

3. The recitation of lengthy passages for the most part but poorly memorized could not, in any sense of the word, be called instruction. No such practice as this could be said to be of permanent value to the pupils. To be sure, it was possible for a pupil to memorize the four Gospels, but this was no proof that he had entered into an appreciation of their meaning and spirit. The teacher had no time to explain the truths to the pupils. He was like a counting-machine, registering the number of verses acquired. There was no opportunity provided for discussion, questions, or problems. Had there been time, it is likely that the passage recited would have had little or no appeal to the needs, interests, and capacities of that age group.

4. This type of instruction was bound eventually to prove exceedingly uninteresting. One can easily imagine a number of pupils reciting a series of Bible verses in a dreary monotone, and thus be convinced of the tedium of such procedure. Both teacher and pupils were forced to listen to the tiresome recital. A Sunday-school worker, writing in 1829, describes the teacher's task as follows: "Even the teachers had to bring to bear all the influences of a religious motive to force themselves to continue in the drudgery of listening to recitations, which were

doubly tedious from their length and the ignorance of their scholars."²⁴

SUMMARY

The Wesleyan Revival in England had its influence in America. The latter part of the eighteenth century was especially marked by religious fervor. The tendency was away from the formal intellectual statements of religion, to a more direct study of the Bible. In the second decade of the nineteenth century this is especially marked in the Sunday school by extensive memorization from the Scriptures. Since the Bible is not adapted to the needs of the various age groups, the pupils had no principles for selecting materials, but formed the habit of choosing Scripture at random, usually those portions that lent themselves to ready memorization. Prizes were awarded to those pupils who had learned the greatest amount of material. The whole system was marked by serious defects: judgment and the emotions were neglected, the memory was crammed with a mass of unrelated materials, and the motive was commercialized by an undue attention to an artificial rivalry. If any moral or religious impressions were made by such instruction, they were incidental and not a real consequence of the method.

The system led to serious dissatisfaction on the part of both pupils and teachers. Pupils tired of hearing their fellows, and teachers were bored by the whole situation. Sunday-school leaders who knew something of the psychology of the child mind began to insist on a change to something better. It is the task of the next chapter to relate the transition to an improved system.

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CHAPTER VII

“SELECTED SCRIPTURE” LESSONS

THIS chapter considers: (1) the feeling of dissatisfaction with the unorganized type of Bible study which was soon to lead to something better, (2) the early attempts at selecting definite portions of Scripture for study, (3) the efforts of the New York Sunday School Union and the American Sunday School Union to provide definite lessons selected from the Bible, and (4) the systems of helps prepared by Mr. Albert Judson for the New York Sunday School Union, and by a Sunday-school superintendent (anonymous) of Princeton, New Jersey.

REASONS FOR AND EARLY ATTEMPTS TO PROVIDE
SELECTED LESSONS

Dissatisfaction with the unorganized study of Scripture. The limitations of an unsupervised Bible study, such as has been described in the preceding chapter, caused both pupils and teachers to have a feeling of dissatisfaction with that method. Sunday-school leaders, objecting to the enormous amount of memorization of Scripture verses, urged the teachers to direct the pupils to learn a smaller number of verses and to give attention to their inherent truths.

Teachers also realized the seriousness of the situation, but, on account of two limitations, they were unable to comply with the exhortation to explain and apply the important thoughts contained in the verses which had been memorized. First, the teachers, for the most part, were untrained; secondly, they did not possess curriculum materials. These two factors combined made a very serious situation, for, after the children had recited their verses, and the teachers had perhaps asked a few questions in the hope of helping the children to understand better what they had committed, the teachers were unable to do more.

There were no systematic materials at hand in the form of helps, questions, and textbooks containing definite selections to serve as guides. In view of these needs leaders in the movement for better instruction set themselves to the task of preparing materials.

Early attempts toward Scripture selections. Pioneer attempts were made to select definite portions from the Scriptures which might be used for memorization, or as the basis of instruction. These attempts were a little in advance of the main movement. Two of them will be noted here.

(1) *The plan by S. G. Goodrich.* In the year 1820, S. G. Goodrich published a book of questions on the Bible covering both the Old and New Testaments, planned especially for the use of young persons.¹ The book was divided into two parts, Part One containing the questions on the Old Testament, and Part Two those on the New Testament. Exactly the same plan is followed throughout the book. The author asked a number of questions on each chapter of each of the books of the Bible so that teachers could use them as a basis in conducting the recitation. Excerpts from Volume Two will make the plan clear, and give us an idea of the treatment.

Acts, Chapter XVIII

- When Paul left Athens, where did he go? 1.²
 With whom did he reside at Corinth? 2, 3.
 What did Paul in the synagogue every Sabbath day? 4.
 How did the Jews receive his preaching? 6.
 What spoke the Lord in a vision to Paul? 9, 10.
 How long did he continue at Corinth? 11.
 Where did Paul then go? 18-23.
 What is said of the character of Apollos and his labors? 24-28.³

Romans, Chapter I

- To whom does Paul address this epistle? 7.
 Was he ashamed of the gospel of Christ? 16.
 What is the gospel to those who believe? 16, 17.
 Why are sinners exposed to the wrath of God? 18-20.
 What description does Paul give of the Gentile world? 23-32.⁴

¹ Goodrich, S. G., *Questions on the Bible, of the Old and New Testaments; For the Use of Young Persons.*

² The figures at the right refer to the verses of the chapter.

³ Goodrich, S. G., *Questions on the Bible*, vol. ii, p. 44.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

Revelations, Chapter I

What was the design of this book? 1.

By whom was it written? 5.

Which of the churches does the apostle address? 4.

To whom does he ascribe glory and dominion? 5, 6.

For what was John in the Isle of Patmos? 9.

Upon what day was the revelation made to him? 10.

When the apostle had turned to see the voice which spoke to him, what did he behold? 12.

Whom did he see in the midst of the golden candlesticks? 13.

What did Christ say unto him? 18.⁶

A study of this question book in the light of its background reveals at least the following considerations.

1. It was definite and selective. That is, the author gives specific attention to the chapter and verses under consideration that may be used on a given Sunday.

2. It provided a plan. The teacher on the basis of the size of the class and the time at his disposal could concentrate upon certain parts of the book, or cover the entire book.

3. It provided a way to escape the unrestricted and unorganized memory work so common in that day. The teacher could assign a chapter, or parts of a chapter or chapters, to be memorized. This material, then, would serve as the basis for the class questions.

4. It contained definite questions. Questions followed in a mechanical fashion often prove uninteresting, but the untrained teacher could find a suggestion here as to other questions that she might care to raise.

5. There were no answers given with the questions. The question was accompanied by a verse citation which caused the pupil to go directly to the Scriptures. Such a plan accomplished two things: first, it sent the pupils to the Bible; secondly, it required certain discrimination and judgment on the part of the pupil.

6. This book, in the hands of a teacher who understood a class-situation, would lend itself to class participation and discussion, since the questions called out the historical situation and

⁶ Goodrich, S. G., *Questions on the Bible*, vol. ii, pp. 64-65.

suggested an approach to moral and spiritual problems embodied in the selection.

7. Like practically all the question books that were to follow, it was constructed on the chronological basis rather than on the psychological. The idea was to study a gospel, a book, or the entire Bible from the beginning to the end, following its chronological organization.

(2) *Fowle's Scripture Lessons*. In 1823, William B. Fowle published a book of Scripture lessons which consisted of selections from the Old and New Testaments, and contained neither questions nor answers.⁶ Mr. Fowle divided the book into three parts as follows: Part I, the historical sections of the Old Testament, such as "Creation of the World," "Creation of Man," and "Adam's Transgression";⁷ Part II, lessons, such as "Of Divine Worship," "The Duty of Parents Toward Their Children," "Duties of Masters and Servants," and "Love to God and Man," stressing our duty toward God and man, the biblical verses supporting these being gleaned from various parts of the Bible and arranged under appropriate heads; Part III, selections from the Evangelists and Acts of the Apostles, the lessons from the Gospels presenting a fair résumé of the life and teachings of Jesus and the selections chosen from the Acts centering around Peter, John, Stephen, and Paul.

Although the selections from the Old Testament of an historical nature and those from the Gospels and the Acts are not at all different in language from the text in chronological form, Part II introduces a unique feature. Here the author chooses what he considers to be the representative duties toward God and man and then proceeds to select portions from both Testaments that give the biblical viewpoint on these relationships. To give an example of his procedure, a portion of one of the topics is listed here.

Of Laziness

Proverbs VI—9. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? When wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?

10. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep.

⁶ Fowle, William B., *Scripture Lessons being a New Selection from the Old and New Testaments*.

⁷ A complete list of the selections in Parts I, II, and III is given in the appendix, p. 323.

11. So shall thy poverty come as one that travaileth, and thy want as an armed man.

Eccles. V—12. The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.

Ephesians IV—28. Let him that stole steal no more; but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

Proverbs VI—6. Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise.

7. Which having no guide, overseer or ruler,

8. Provideth her nest in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.

This excerpt contains only a limited number of the verses gathered from the various parts of the Scriptures which bear upon the topic under consideration. Exactly this same procedure is followed throughout the lesson and is typical of all the selections in Part II.

Containing neither questions nor answers, this is strictly a book of selected Scripture passages arranged so that they may be used as basic lesson material. Such a scheme in permanent form provides a lesson book so that the pupils may have a definite but limited amount of Scripture to commit to memory for each assignment. There is rich provision here in basic material for the use of the teacher, although the untrained teacher would be handicapped by the lack of questions to serve as guides. Each lesson selection consists of fifteen or sixteen verses.

Summary. In our study thus far we have noted the dissatisfaction with the unsupervised method of Bible study so prevalent in the Sunday school near the close of the first quarter of the nineteenth century. We have examined two representative attempts to supply the demand for a better system so that pupils might give their attention to a limited number of verses and enter more fully into the meaning of each verse. It is now our purpose to examine the typical lesson materials of the movement proper.

•THE SELECTED LESSON SYSTEM

A selected lesson is one which has been chosen either by an individual or by an organization for purposes of instruction. It was called a selected lesson in contrast with the haphazard,

random selection of verses on the part of the pupils themselves. The system of selected lessons was largely in the hands of the American Sunday School Union. To the development of the system we now turn our attention.

TYPES OF LESSONS

The Parmele Lessons. In the year 1823 Mr. Truman Parmele, who was superintendent of the Utica Union Sabbath School, published for the use of Sunday-school teachers a small volume containing a series of simple questions on the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles.⁸ Each lesson was limited to a single chapter and the questions accompanying the lesson very seldom exceeded one question for each verse.⁹ It was not Mr. Parmele's idea that the Sunday-school teacher should depend wholly upon the questions contained in his volume; he felt that the questions might constitute only a general outline to be modified by the teachers as they saw fit.

Lessons by Tomlinson and Seaton. In 1824, two Sunday schools in New York adopted a plan of uniform selected lessons by arranging a scheme of lessons without questions, for general use in all the classes in their respective schools. The lessons centered about the chief events in the life of Christ. The plan used in these two Sunday schools has been described at some length in an annual report of the New York Sunday School Union. An excerpt from the report follows:

"The committee have particularly noticed in schools No. 16 and 23,¹⁰ a plan of systematizing the course of instruction from the Scriptures, and in a manner which meets the views of the committee, as to the conciseness of the lessons for recitation in Sunday schools, which cannot be too highly recommended. They have arranged select portions of Scripture for every Sunday in the year, comprising from ten to twenty verses each. One of these portions is announced each Sabbath to the whole school,

⁸ *Union Questions*, vol. i, preface.

⁹ Rice, Wilbur, *Important and Remarkable Epochs in the History of Sunday Schools*, not paged.

¹⁰ *Ninth Annual Report*, New York Sunday School Union, 1825. From a table in the report, one learns that No. 16 is attached to the church of which William A. Tomlinson was pastor, and No. 23 was held in the church of which S. W. Seaton was rector.

and all engaged the following Sabbath in receiving instruction from the same lesson. This has already affected a union of exertion pleasing and efficacious, and has excited the liveliest interest with both teachers and taught, and many benefits are likely to flow from it. Each scholar is supplied with a printed card containing the selection, the lesson for that Sunday being numbered in order. The scholars are required to read the portion during the week, and, after receiving instruction on it, to commit it for recitation. This new and useful plan has been adopted by No. 23 in connection with No. 16; and the pastor of the church to which No. 16 is attached gives a weekly lecture to the teachers of both schools on the lessons for every Sabbath. These lessons are chronologically arranged so as to embrace all the leading incidents of the Gospels in due order. The lectures are calculated greatly to inform and interest the teachers, and are beautifully adapted to facilitate the instruction of the pupils in the knowledge of divine truths."¹¹

These two plans of selected lessons were influential in causing the new scheme to gain popular favor. This is particularly true of the lessons by Tomlinson and Seaton. They attracted the attention of the New York Association of Sunday School Teachers, with the result that that body passed a resolution in October, 1824, to the effect that all lessons for recitation in Sunday schools should be selected and previously explained by the teachers.¹²

The trial list of the New York Sunday School Union. In all probability it was the experiment being carried on in the Sunday schools of Tomlinson and Seaton, re-enforced by the action of the New York Association of Sunday School Teachers, that led the New York Sunday School Union to issue in 1824 a list of selected lessons to cover a period of five months, beginning January 1, 1825. The trial list is given here:

FIRST COURSE OF SCRIPTURE LESSONS

January 9th	John 1: 1-14	Divinity of Christ.
January 16th	Matthew 1: 1-17	Genealogy of Christ.
	Luke 3: 23-38	

¹¹ *Ninth Annual Report*, New York Sunday School Union, 1825, p. 14.

¹² *Report of the Oneida County Sunday School Union*, September 7, 1825, p. 3.

January 23rd	Luke 1: 1-23	Appearance of the angel to Zacharias.
January 30th	Luke 1: 26-38	The annunciation to Mary.
February 13th	Luke 2: 1-20	Mary going to Bethlehem and birth of Christ.
February 20th	Luke 2: 21-38	Dedication of Christ at the Temple.
February 27th	Matthew 2: 1-23	Wise men seeking for Christ
March 13th	Luke 2: 41-52	Christ taken to Jerusalem at 12 years of age.
March 20th	Matthew 3: 1-17	Preaching of John and baptism of Christ.
March 27th	Matthew 4: 1-11	Christ tempted in the wilderness.
April 10th	John 1: 15-34	Testimony of John to his Messiahship.
April 17th	John 1: 35-51	The calling of part of his disciples.
April 24th	John 2: 1-11	Christ's first miracle at Cana of Galilee.
May 8th	John 2: 12-22	Goes to Jerusalem and cleanses the Temple.
May 15th	John 3: 1-21	Christ's conversation with Nicodemus.
May 22nd	Matthew 4: 12-24	The calling of the disciples. ¹³

A study of the trial list given above reveals at least the following facts:

1. It was an experiment, the thought being that its use for five months would demonstrate either its value or lack of it.

2. It was taken from the Gospels and stressed the "life" of Jesus rather than his "teachings." In this respect the list of lessons bears resemblance to the experiment which was being carried on in the schools of William A. Tomlinson and S. W. Seaton in New York City.

3. The issuing of this list of lessons by a Sunday School Union was indicative of an increasing favor toward a plan that offered some systematic study of the Bible. Before this action on the part of the New York Union the attempts to better the lesson situation had been local, where individuals, here and there, had proposed certain selections of lessons as have been indicated in this study. Here, for the first time, a strong Sunday-school union was offering a plan of selected lessons that might be used by the various Sunday schools within its territory.

4. The lessons were issued without question, note, or comment. In this respect they were unlike the system issued by Mr. Parmele but similar to the system used by William A. Tomlinson and S. W. Seaton.

¹³ *The American Sunday School Magazine*, 1825, p. 48.

5. The number of verses chosen for a lesson averaged about sixteen, which tended to offset long memorization, and to furnish a lesson brief enough for study and explanation.

The trial list of lessons issued by the American Sunday School Union. In the year 1824 a great Sunday-school organization had its beginning. In reality it was the outcome of a merger of several Sunday-school organizations already in existence. The First Day Society, founded in 1791, led to the establishment of the Philadelphia Sunday and Adult School Union in 1817, which, with similar societies of other States, was changed into the American Sunday School Union—a larger national body—in 1824.¹⁴

The newly formed union must have favored the plan of selected lessons, for, in March, 1825, it issued a list of *Selected Lessons for One Year*, on cards, consisting of studies in the life of Christ.¹⁵

Doctor Edwin Wilbur Rice, at one time secretary of the American Sunday School Union, stated in a paper presented at the Eleventh International Sunday School Convention at Toronto in 1905, that the lessons proposed by the Union proved to be very satisfactory.¹⁶ The American Sunday School Union, because of its influence as a national organization, was in a position to promote the lesson scheme and to give it a wider trial than it had enjoyed up to this time. As a result, the selected lesson scheme was successfully introduced into Sunday schools in New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Albany.¹⁷ The New York Sunday School Union was so enthusiastic over the lesson plan published by the American Sunday School Union, that it proposed to the latter organization the preparation of a second course of lessons. A second course was prepared, accordingly, and was issued together with the first year's course, the two-year plan consisting of eighty-five lessons—forty-nine in the first course and thirty-six in the second course. For example, one lesson consisted of John 1.1-14 on the "Divinity of Christ."

¹⁴ *A Descriptive Catalogue of the American Sunday School Union 1817-1925*. Back page gives origin.

¹⁵ *The Sunday School Magazine*, 1825, p. 83.

¹⁶ Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *Important and Remarkable Epochs in the History of Sunday Schools*, 1905, not paged.

¹⁷ *Ibid*.

Another told about the "Testimony of John to his Messiahship," John 1.15-24.¹⁸

A study of the two courses referred to above, and of the documents concerning them, reveal at least the following considerations:

1. The object which the American Sunday School Union had in mind when it issued the trial list of lessons was to give Sunday schools outside of New York an opportunity to test out the new system of uniform selected lessons. The Union did not make any attempt to introduce its trial list into the Sunday-schools of New York since the New York Sunday School Union through its trial list had made a provision for the schools of that city.

2. The courses comprise the life and teachings of Jesus, the first being devoted to the life, and the second to the teachings.

3. The lists are of unequal length. The first-year's course contained forty-nine lessons and the second, thirty-six. The studies for the first year were planned so that the remaining Sundays could be devoted to a quarterly examination of the pupils. The Tenth Annual Report of the New York Sunday School Union, in a footnote on the second year's course, includes the following statement: "The course is intended to occupy every Sabbath through the year, excepting the first Sabbath of every month and one Sabbath in every quarter, which should be given to reviewing the lessons and an examination before the pastor of the church."¹⁹

4. The lessons were numbered, the passage of Scripture was cited, although the text was not printed, and each lesson was given a title.

5. The fact that the lessons were issued without questions, notes, or comments, left the teacher free to make any use of the lesson which she might desire.

6. The trial list issued by the American Sunday School Union was like the schemes of Tomlinson and Seaton, and the short list proposed by the New York Sunday School Union, in that it was issued without notes or comments, and in that it was selected

¹⁸ A complete list of the lessons for the first and second year is to be found in the appendix, p. 324.

¹⁹ *Tenth Annual Report of the New York Sunday School Union*, 1826, p. 38.

from the Gospels and dealt with the life of Jesus. It differed from them in that it furnished a two-year course and stressed the "teachings" of Jesus by adding a second year dealing with that theme.

The revised list by the American Sunday School Union. Dr. Edwin Wilbur Rice, in his paper on the history of Sunday schools, points out that the issuing of selected lessons by the American Sunday School Union for this system of Bible won the day.²⁰ He says, further, that there was a general demand for a wide extension system of lessons for Sunday-school study. The American Sunday School Union responded to this call not by issuing a new set of lessons but by a revision of the trial lists for the first and second courses.

In the revision of the two courses the plan remained fundamentally the same; that is, a definite Scripture passage was selected and issued without note, question, or comment. There were, however, some differences. (1) The first-year course, formerly containing forty-nine lessons, was reduced to forty, and the second year's course, which formerly contained thirty-six lessons, was increased to forty lessons. (2) The lessons for each year were divided into quarters, allowing one Sunday of each month for questions, reviews, or special lessons in the catechism as the school might decide. (3) There was some shifting of lessons in the revised list from the regular order of the trial list, with some omissions in the first course and some additions in the second. However, the revised lists contained practically the same lesson materials that were included in the trial lists. For example, in the trial list for the first year, Lesson 8, taken from Matthew 2. 1-23, was entitled, "Wise men seeking Christ," and in the revised list it became Lesson 6, taken from Matthew 2. 1-23, entitled, "Jesus sought by the wise men—the flight into Egypt, and the massacre of the children of Bethlehem." In the first year's course of the trial list, Lesson 9 was taken from Luke 2. 41-52, and was entitled, "Taken to Jerusalem at 12 years of age," and in the revised list it became Lesson 7, taken from

²⁰ Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *Important and Remarkable Epochs in the History of Sunday Schools*. Not paged.

Luke 2.4-52, the title being, "Christ is taken to Jerusalem at 12 years of age."²¹

The revised course was issued with the anticipation that the study would begin in May, 1826.

ACCEPTANCE AND USE OF THE SELECTED LESSONS

Judging from the reports of Sunday School Unions and the issues of the *American Sunday School Magazine*, one is forced to the conclusion that the system of selective lessons rapidly gained in popular favor and was widely used in the Sunday schools of the United States.

The New York Sunday School Union, placing itself on record as heartily in favor of the plan, recommended the *Selected Scripture Lessons* to every one of its schools in these words, "We trust that this plan will very soon be so systematized that every school may be furnished with the same lesson—that thus every teacher and every scholar may be occupied upon the same subject at the same time."²² The Eleventh Annual Report of the New York Sunday School Society reports that by 1827 the *Selected Scripture Lessons* had been introduced into fifty-eight schools with unquestioned success.²³ The Twelfth Annual Report stated that the Selected Lessons were almost universally introduced.

When the *American Sunday School Magazine*²⁴ printed the Selected Lessons in 1825 it expressed a desire that the new system would be universally adopted, and the Massachusetts Society reported that it was generally adopted there. The *American Sunday School Magazine*, which was the principal Sunday-school periodical of that day, repeatedly printed reports from all parts of the United States telling of the favor with which the new lesson system had been received. One gets the impression as he reads through its pages that the new scheme of lessons had come to possess the Sunday-school world to a marked degree.

The report of the American Sunday School Union in 1827

²¹ *The Third Report of the American Sunday School Union*, 1827.

²² *Tenth Annual Report of the New York Sunday School Union*, 1826, p. 9.

²³ *Report of the New York Sunday School Union*, 1827, p. 6.

²⁴ The *American Sunday School Magazine* was the official Sunday-school organ of the American Sunday-school lesson.

includes the following concerning the *Selected Scripture Lessons*: "This system of instruction has been already adopted in a large number of Sunday schools, and its effects are truly beneficial. . . . Thousands of pupils have been led to habits of intense thought, and to an understanding of the truths which they have recited. . . . From the facilities of this system, and the progress which it has made the past year, there is reason to believe that its adoption will soon be general."²⁵

Doctor Edwin Wilbur Rice, in his pamphlet called *Important and Remarkable Epochs in the History of Sunday Schools*, makes the statement that the leading ministers and educators in all parts of the United States had given an unqualified commendation to the *Selected Scripture Lessons*, and as proof of his statement he cites the names of nine outstanding clergymen of the day and five prominent educators, and remarks that the list might easily be made five times as long; and to this testimony should be added the indorsements of the plan by the first National Sunday School Convention (1832).²⁶ Another excellent evidence that the plan of *Selected Lessons* had met with popular favor was the fact that in 1827 the Union announced a continuation of the plan which was to include five annual courses of instruction. The plan materialized, and it will be given further consideration under the title *Union Questions*. These facts would seem to indicate that the new system of lesson selection had won the hearty approval of the Sunday-school world.

ESTIMATE OF THE SELECTED LESSONS

The estimate of the new system had best be divided into its advantages and disadvantages, or elements of strength and weakness.

The advantages over the previous system. When one compares the limited lesson scheme with the lack of organization in curricula, which it displayed, several factors are at once apparent:

1. The new lesson scheme broke the vicious system of haphazard selection of verses on the part of pupils, and afforded

²⁵ *Third Annual Report of the American Sunday School Union*, 1827, p. xxviii.

²⁶ Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *Important and Remarkable Epochs in the History of Sunday Schools*, not paged.

them instead, a short, definite assignment for memorization and study. Its essential merit was that it avoided the waste of committing to memory large portions of Scripture. So successful was it in this that the New York Sunday School Union reported in 1827 that the old plan of committing large portions of the Scriptures to memory was generally relinquished.²⁷

2. The selective system provided a plan whereby teachers had an opportunity to give instruction on the materials which the pupils had committed to memory. The Sunday-school superintendents and ministers were provided with lists of the lessons and the ministers often lectured on the meaning of the verses.²⁸ The teachers were no longer adding-machines keeping count of a vast number of verses recited by their pupils, but were left free to give actual instruction. The limited or selected lessons aimed at a true and right understanding of what was studied.

3. The *Selected Scripture Lessons* provided a means for studying the entire Bible. The two-year course, which we have examined, was confined to the Gospels, but the five-year course, announced in 1827, comprised a study not only of the life and teachings of Jesus but also of the Epistles and Revelation, biographies and stories from the Old Testament, and studies in the Old Testament prophecies.²⁹

4. The system provided a uniform lesson for the school, all pupils studying the same lesson. It was unfortunate from the educational point of view that the same lesson was chosen for all ages and grades of scholars, but within a given class it was far superior to the former method in which each pupil had his own lesson, there being as many lessons as there were pupils. The new plan brought unity within the class and that was highly desirable.

5. Attention has been called to the fact that the new system, when revised, provided for reviews at stated intervals. This

²⁷ *Eleventh Annual Report of the New York Sunday School Union*, May, 1827.

²⁸ Already in this study attention has been called to the fact that the pastor of school Number 16, in New York City, delivered a weekly lecture to the teachers on the lesson for the coming Sunday. Dr. Edwin W. Rice points out in his book, *The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union*, p. 112, that in New York City alone, nineteen pastors delivered weekly lectures on the lessons to their teachers (1826).

²⁹ *Union Questions*, vol. i, preface.

made it possible for the teachers to check up on their instruction and was far superior to the previous plan in which there was no provision for either recall or reconsideration.³⁰

6. As will be pointed out in the following chapter, the new scheme of lessons was soon to call forth a system of helps for both pupil and teacher. It was true that the superintendents and pastors aided the teachers by lectures and instruction, but there was a conviction on the part of the teachers that they ought to have some definite lesson helps that would serve as a guide in conducting the lesson.

7. The general results seemed to be much more satisfactory than those of the previous era. The *American Sunday School Magazine* comments on this general improvement under seven heads: "(1) The pupils manifest a greater interest in the lessons; (2) They are more ardently attached to the school; (3) There is more rapid progress in getting a better knowledge of the Scriptures; (4) The new system has led to habits of thinking and meditating on the meaning of the words committed to memory; (5) It is easier to retain the older scholars; (6) The teachers manifest a greater interest; and (7) The parents are more interested."³¹

It would appear, therefore, on the testimony of a Sunday-school periodical which reflected the opinion from all parts of the country, that the new scheme of lessons was more satisfactory to pupils, teachers, and parents than the former scheme of unsupervised memorization.

The limitations of the Selected Scripture Lessons. The studies provided by the new scheme had serious limitations.

1. They were Bible-centered. This meant, of course, that material mastered, was the first consideration.

2. Naturally, in a system where the chief aim is to give information, there is a tendency to give but little attention to the problems of the pupils. The lessons did not provide for the life situation of the children.

³⁰ Dr. Edwin Wilbur Rice, in his book, *The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union*, page 114, describes the examinations somewhat as follows: In some instances public examinations were held. At such times the pupils were conducted into the church auditorium and the pastor gave out the questions from the pulpit. When the questions had been concluded, there followed a short address and usually the singing of several hymns.

³¹ *The American Sunday School Magazine*, June 1827, p. 161.

3. The limited lessons were issued without question, note, or comment, and this situation proved to be very embarrassing to many teachers. In the previous era of hearing verses there was something to occupy the class hour, but the present system of a basic text without helps created for some a very serious situation.

It is our purpose, next, to give attention to the attempts to satisfy the demand which we have just now suggested.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PERIOD OF LESSON HELPS

It will be worth while next to examine and evaluate the lesson helps that were prepared to assist the teachers in their task of instructing their pupils in the knowledge of the Bible.

The Bible, taken by itself, is a rather difficult book. Names, places, customs, events, and teachings call for explanation. When the Sunday-school teachers turned from the plan of hearing verses to an attempt to give instruction from the Bible, it became necessary to make some provision for teaching helps. As Chancellor Ferris put it: "The searching into the deep meaning of the sacred volume called for other auxiliaries; commentaries were required by teachers, or some substitute. As few teachers could buy them, this want was met by the lectures of many a pastor, who made the lesson the subject of his weekly exercise."¹

Very few of the teachers were qualified to conduct the class recitation unassisted, and teachers with little or no experience felt the need of a "brief" or lesson guide, if they were to handle the new scheme of lesson successfully. To supply this demand, books of questions were prepared. The "question book" became the prevailing type of lesson help for the next half century. It is very natural that the lesson helps should take the form of a question book. We have pointed out, earlier in this study,² that the instruction from the catechism was declining as the Bible gained in influence, but for the most part the catechetical method prevailed in educational procedure. Apropos of this situation, E. W. Rice says: "In support of questioning as a mode of teaching Scripture lessons, the educators of that day urged: 'The plan aims to secure some right understanding of the Scrip-

¹ See Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *Important and Remarkable Epochs in the History of Sunday Schools*. Not paged.

² Chapter V, page 107.

ture studied. For this end it requires the teachers to make use of simple and various questions, questions suited to compel attention to every minute point, to excite and draw forth thought, and to awaken the moral sensibility of the heart.' ³ It is now our task to see how the need for lesson helps was met by the lesson writers of that day.

TYPES OF LESSON HELPS

We shall first examine one book available to teachers as a general background of information, and then give attention to the specific lesson helps which were used by pupils and teachers alike.

The Union Bible Dictionary.⁴ One of the books designed to meet the need of the teacher for general information was the *Union Bible Dictionary*. It is stated in the preface of this book that it is intended to be a complete biblical cyclopædia. Before we examine the contents of the dictionary, perhaps it would be well to note the general principles upon which the book was built.

- I. No word is introduced, as the subject of an article, which is not found in the canonical books of the common translation of the Bible, and at least one passage is cited in which the word occurs.
- II. No word is introduced simply for the purpose of defining it, unless it has a peculiar Scripture use or signification, which would not be found in a common defining dictionary.
- III. Whatever could be regarded as sectarian by any denomination of evangelical Christians is, of course, scrupulously excluded.
- IV. No word is admitted into the body of the dictionary of which all that can be said is found in immediate connection with the word itself. For example Ard (Gen. XLVI. 21) is mentioned as one of the sons of Benjamin; and, as the passage itself contains all that can be said of him, the word is omitted.
- V. The leading articles embrace, as far as practicable, the various topics that properly fall under it. For example: under the word "dwelling" will be found the principal facts in relation to the structure of Eastern houses, as the court, roof, windows, parlors, chambers, etc.
- VI. Though each article is complete in itself, and as full as it may be in a work of this size, we hope that most biblical inquirers are disposed to seek still further information.

³ Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *Important and Remarkable Epochs in the History of Sunday Schools*, not paged.

⁴ The *Union Bible Dictionary* was published by the American Sunday School Union and was a part of their plan to meet all of the needs of the teacher.

- VII. We have made all practicable use of the information furnished by modern travelers in the East, and especially by American missionaries, to whose journals frequent references will be given.
- VIII. It is confidently believed that in no volume of the kind are there fewer errors in references. Great care was taken to have the copy accurate in this respect. . . .

A few examples will make clear the style and content of the *Bible Dictionary*. The samples listed here are typical of the entire book since exactly the same plan is used throughout.

AARONITES (I Chron. XII. 27). Levites of the family of Aaron; the priests who served the sanctuary, Eleazar, Aaron's son, was their chief. (Num. IV. 16.)⁵

Abel, Great Stone of (I Sam. VI. 18), was in the field of Joshua of Bethshemech, where the ark of the Lord rested when it was returned by the Philistines to Kirjath-Jearim.⁶

Beans (Ezekiel IV. 9). A well-known garden vegetable, which was anciently often mixed with other vegetable substances in making bread.⁷

Meat, meats (Gen. I. 29; Mark VII. 19). The food of the Hebrews was regulated by the appointment of God. Their methods of cooking meats were various, though they never ate of food dressed by any other than a Jew, nor of food prepared by any other kitchen utensils than those of their own nation. What animals they might eat, and what they ought not, was particularly commanded (Lev. XI, Deut. XIV). The import of the word *meat* seems to have undergone a considerable change since our version of the Bible was made; for in this it means food in general; or, when confined to one species of food, always signifies meal, flour, or grain; but never flesh, which is now the usual acceptance of the word. A *meat offering* in the Scripture is always a vegetable and never an animal offering; and it might now be rendered a *bread offering* or a *meal offering*, instead of a meat offering.⁸

The dictionary, giving as it did the meaning of important names and phrases, and a description of places, was probably of considerable value to those engaged in giving instruction in the Bible.

The Judson Questions. We have indicated in Chapter VII that a trial list of forty-nine lessons was revised and issued for use from May, 1826, to May, 1827. It was also pointed out that the second year course was revised, and increased to forty lessons to correspond in length to the first-year course, and issued so that it might be used from May 1827 to May 1828. Furthermore, it was explained that both of these lists were issued

⁵ *The Union Bible Dictionary*, p. 8.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 343.

without question, note, or comment and that this fact proved a serious handicap to both pupils and teachers.

(1) *Origin of the Judson Questions.* The New York Sunday School Union secured the services of the Reverend Albert Judson as its agent to prepare, in 1826, a set of questions to be used in connection with the two courses of *Selected Lessons* already issued by the American Sunday School Union. Judson's book bore the title, *A Series of Questions on the Selected Scripture Lessons for Sunday Schools*. The purpose of the Judson Questions is clearly stated in the preface: "To aid teachers in expounding them [the *Selected Lessons*], to facilitate their instruction, and to guide their pupils in their studies is the design of this volume of questions."⁹

(2) *Form and content of the Judson Questions.* The questions were issued in two volumes to correspond respectively to the first- and second-year courses of the *Selected Scripture Lessons*. Mr. Judson prepared three sets of questions or "examples." The "examples" are best described in Judson's own words: "The first example is designed to be plain and easy, and such as may be answered according to the letters of the text. The second contains less simplicity, requires more energy of thought, leads the teacher and his pupil to an exposition of each verse, and is given like the former, in the order in which it occurs in the lesson. The third comprises promiscuous questions, which arise from the subject of the recitation, and from passages in different parts of the Bible which are connected with this subject. This example is calculated to test the ability of pupils; to lead them to reflection; to acquaint them with other portions of Scripture; and to make them apply the truth to their own consciences."¹⁰

An examination of the Judson Questions reveals exactly the same procedure throughout, and excerpts from one lesson will therefore make clear the nature and style of the entire system. Lesson XIX of Volume I has been selected for purposes of illus-

⁹ A copy of this book may be found in the library at Union Theological Seminary, New York City, and another at the American Sunday School Union Library in Philadelphia.

¹⁰ Judson, Albert, *A Series of Questions on the Selected Scripture Lessons for Sunday Schools*, preface.

tration. "Example" I of this lesson contains thirty-two questions in all, of which three are recorded here; "Example" II contains thirty-six questions, of which three are listed here, together with a like number from the twenty-eight questions of "Example" III.¹¹

LESSON XIX

Matthew, Chapter X. Verses 1-18. *Jesus instructs the twelve apostles and sends them forth to preach.*

Example I

Whom did Jesus call to him?
 What did he give them?
 What did he give them power to do?

Example II

Why did Christ call to him his twelve disciples?
 Those who were possessed with devils or unclean spirits, had at the same time diseases. What were the disciples to do before they healed these persons?
 What does the name of Peter signify?
 Ans. A rock.

Example III

Mark III. 13 Where was Jesus when he called to him the twelve apostles?
 Mark VI. 7 Did he send out each apostle alone, or was he to have one to go with him?
 Christ called these apostles to preach—should any men become ministers if they be not called of him?
 Mark III. 17 Why did he give them the power of working miracles?

(3) *Suggestions offered to teachers.* Mr. Judson, in the preface, made some suggestions designed to assist teachers in the use of the lessons. They may be summed up as follows:

1. The teachers were asked to consider each example in order.
2. Teachers were asked to examine the marginal references and comment on them as they deemed proper.
3. Since there were many questions on the second and third examples that the pupils could not answer, the teachers were to become familiar with the proper answers and meaning during the week, and, if possible, should read some commentary on the lesson or persuade the pastor to lecture on it.
4. It was suggested to the superintendent of the Sunday school that at the close of each lesson he should make a few remarks

¹¹ In the appendix is to be found ten questions from each of the three "examples," p. 326.

on it, or that he should ask the pupils indiscriminately a few general questions.

5. The teachers should see to it that those pupils who could not commit the whole lesson to memory at least should read with attention that which they could not commit, so that they might be prepared to receive instruction upon it. Here is a clear statement that pupils were not to neglect the memorization of Scriptures, but the amount, of course, was to be limited and instruction was to supplement memory work.

6. In the case of pupils who were very young or had read but little, it was considered best, in most cases, to ask them no questions except those belonging to the first example.

7. Each volume was to be used as an annual course of instruction. The teacher was asked to use the last Sunday of each month for a review of some of the past recitations or to attend to such other instruction as the managers of the school thought expedient. Each pupil was expected to possess a question book.

(4) *Adoption and use.* It would appear that the Judson Questions supplied a popular demand and enjoyed a wide circulation. The questions were first published in 1826, yet in the preface to the third edition, published in 1827, it was stated that this system of instruction had been already adopted in a large number of Sabbath schools. The general feeling was that the book was of great benefit. In the preface to the *Union Questions*, Volume I, there is a statement to the effect that the Judson Questions were extensively known in the Sabbath-school world and went through many editions. The Eleventh Annual Report of the New York Sunday School Union in commenting on both the *Selected Scripture Lessons* and the Judson Questions says: "In proof of their excellence, it may be stated that they would have been introduced, no doubt, much more generally if the questions in sufficient quantities could have been supplied. Demands have been made for them from every part of the Union, and at their meeting in March the committee gave permission for printing 5,000 copies of the questions, which probably will afford but a very inadequate supply."¹² The American Sunday

¹² *The Eleventh Annual Report of the New York Sunday School Union, 1827, p. 6.*

School Union, also, reports that the system of questions had been adopted in a large number of Sunday schools and that its effects had proved very beneficial.¹³

(5) *The Judson Questions differ from the Parmele Questions.* The differences here may be summed up under three heads: First, the system issued by Mr. Parmele followed each of the Gospels in chronological order, while the series of questions prepared by Mr. Judson was selected from the different Gospels and did not follow any one in particular. Secondly, Mr. Parmele did not divide his questions into grades or "examples" as did Mr. Judson. Thirdly, the Judson book contained a great number of questions on each verse, whereas the Parmele lessons had only one.

Volume II of the Judson Questions, based on the "messages" of Jesus, is formulated on exactly the same plan as the volume which we have examined, and hence requires no further consideration here.

The "rival system" of lessons. Two years later there appeared a series of questions rivaling the work of Mr. Judson, and hence often referred to as the rival system, called *A New Series of Questions on the Select Scripture Lessons for Sabbath Schools*. The new system of questions was prepared by a Sunday-school superintendent of Princeton, New Jersey, and published anonymously. E. W. Rice says that the author was understood to be Harvey Fisk.¹⁴

(1) *Object of the New Series of Questions.* In the preface of this volume it is indicated that the series of questions was written for the benefit of Sunday schools and Bible classes as an aid to children and youth in the study of the Holy Scriptures. The author asks, "Why publish a new series?" "Our answer is, We think the new series will be far better adapted to promote the success and prosperity of Sunday schools in the country. We have felt the need of a series on a plan somewhat different. To supply a want this book is offered." The author evidently felt that the Judson Questions were too difficult. He does not

¹³ *Third Annual Report of the American Sunday School Union*, May 22d, 1827.

¹⁴ Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union*, p. 108.

criticize the point of view taken in them, but is concerned with the actual adaptability to the teaching of the children.

(2) *Explanation of the plan.* The basic lesson text was the system of *Selected Scripture Lessons* issued by the American Sunday School Union, on which Mr. Albert Judson had prepared his two volumes of questions. The Scripture text of the *Selected Lessons* was chosen without alteration in order to give opportunity for using both series of questions in the same school, wherever such a practice should be desirable.

There were two kinds of questions on each verse. The first type was intended to be easy and could be answered by repeating the whole or a part of the verse. Such questions were indented a little to the right of the others on the page. The second type of questions required the pupils to understand the meaning of the passages which they committed to memory.

(3) *Examples of the lesson content.* The plan is uniform throughout the book; hence brief excerpts from two lessons will suffice adequately to illustrate it.

LESSON I

Luke, Chapter I; verses 1 to 23. *Wonderful Appearance of an Angel to Zacharias*

"Hark, 'tis the prophet of the skies
Proclaims redemption near;
The night of death and bondage flies,
The dawning tints appear."

1. What had many done?
What things were most surely believed among them?
2. By whom were "these things" delivered?
Of what were they eye witnesses?
Of what word were they ministers?
3. To whom did Luke write?
Of what had he perfect understanding?
4. Why did he write to Theophilus?
5. Who lived in the days of Herod?
Of what was Herod the King?
What is a priest?
What is meant by the course of Abia?
Of what family was the wife of Zacharias?
Who was Aaron? Exod. 6: 20, 26, 27. Exod. 30: 22, 30.
What kind of a king was Herod?

What did he at Bethlehem after Jesus was born there. Matt. 2: 3.
 What nations ruled over the Jews at that time?
 Why were they brought under the power of the Romans?¹⁵

In this lesson there were twenty-three major questions, in all of which five were given as an example of the material. An excerpt from another lesson is cited next, to show how the plan is followed consistently:

LESSON 18

Mark, Chapter 5: 22-43. *A Sick Woman Healed—the Daughter of Jairus raised to life.*

“She who touched Jesus in the press
 And healing virtue stole—
 Was answered, ‘Daughter go in peace;
 Thy faith hath made thee whole.’”

22. Who came to Christ?
 What was his name?
 Was this after Jesus had returned to Capernaum? Ver. 21.
 Where had he been?
 What did the ruler of the synagogue do when he saw Jesus?
 23. What did he say to him?
 What is the point of death?
 Are little children then exposed to death?
 Are you ready for death?
 What did Jairus believe concerning the power of Jesus?

(4) *Suggestions to teachers¹ and officers.* The author of this course gave rather specific directions for the use of the questions. The teachers were first asked to ascertain each Sunday whether or not the scholars had committed the lesson text to memory. Then they were to ask the questions on the lesson. The author of the book was of the opinion that the good pupils would answer most of the questions, and that the best scholars would answer them all. Teachers were urged to explain carefully each verse, and ask many questions which were not in the book. The superintendent of the school was requested to get the attention of the pupils each Sunday, and examine them, by asking some of the questions in the book. The author suggests that the superintendent put the easiest questions to the youngest pupils

¹⁵ A *New Series of Questions on the Select Scripture Lessons for Sabbath Schools*, p. 5. A copy of this volume may be found in the library of the American Sunday School Union, Philadelphia.

and harder ones to those more advanced. If there is a question that none can answer, the superintendent should point out the explanation and give a few words of exhortation. At times it might be found convenient to divide a long lesson, and spend two weeks on it. In that case the superintendent should make the division so that every class would be working on the same lesson. The writer of this question book felt that the procedure just suggested was very beneficial in that it incited the teachers to greater faithfulness and the pupils to greater diligence in acquiring a thorough knowledge of the lesson.

(5) *The new series differed from the Judson Questions.* The questions prepared by Harvey Fisk, like those of Mr. Judson, were based upon the *Selected Scripture Lessons* but differed from the Judson Questions in several particulars. First, instead of being graded as were the Judson series, the questions of Harvey Fisk were analyzed in a given lesson according to the Bible verses to which they referred. Second, the easy questions were distinguished from the more difficult by a marginal arrangement, the easy questions receiving greater indentation. Third, the biblical verses were cited in the questions by Harvey Fisk so that the pupils might easily connect the questions with the biblical selection to which they referred.

(6) *Adoption and use.* A study of the reports of the Sunday School Unions contemporaneous with the adoption of the *New Series of Questions* leads one to the conclusion that this system did not have as widespread use as the Judson Questions. The reports do not mention the great demand for the *New Series* as they do in the case of the Judson Questions. However, there are two reasons for believing that the *New Series of Questions* did gain a rather wide popularity. First, in the preface to the third edition of *Union Questions*, Volume I (1829), there is this statement: "Both systems of questions enjoyed a considerable circulation. . . ." Second, the American Sunday School Union took steps in 1828 to combine the two systems of questions so as to prevent confusion among the teachers as a result of divided opinion as to the merits of the two systems.¹⁶ It would

¹⁶ *Union Questions*, vol. i, Third Edition, 1829, Preface.

appear from this action that there was sufficient circulation of the *New Series of Questions* to make unity of materials desirable.

The Union Questions. We turn now to the *Union Questions*, which proved to be the most popular of all the helps prepared for use with the *Selected Scripture Lessons*.

(1) *Origin of the Union Questions.* The American Sunday School Union desired a unity in lesson helps as well as unity in the basic Scripture texts known as the *Selected Lessons*. To fulfill this purpose the Union secured control of the "rival" systems of questions¹⁷ and in 1828 delegated Harvey Fisk to unite the best features of both into one system.¹⁸ *Union Questions*, Volume I, represents about an equal choice of questions from each series with additional questions by Mr. Fisk. This volume was the initial step in the movement of the American Sunday School Union to provide helps for the selected lesson plan which it had announced.

(2) *Object of the Union Questions.* The aim of the *Union Questions* was to provide a scheme of lesson helps so that the minds of the children might be incited to a careful and thorough examination of the Scriptures.¹⁹ The questions aimed to focus the attention of the children on the spiritual significance of the lesson, so that out of it all there might come an awakening of the moral sensibilities.

(3) *Explanation of the plan.* The *Union Questions* provided the same lessons for each class and for all grades and ages of pupils, on the theory that too many questions made the recitation mechanical and did not stimulate initiative on the part of the teacher. The plan did not aim to present a large number of questions, on the lessons, but, rather, to make a more effective use of a limited number of carefully selected questions. It was the aim of this system to offer a set of questions that would aid the teacher in analyzing the lesson and impressing the truth upon the mind of the child. The questions were so arranged that they might be adapted to the different capacities found within

¹⁷ Those published by Judson and the unnamed Sunday-school superintendent.

¹⁸ *Union Questions*, vol. i, preface.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. i, preface.

the class and at the same time give the teachers a means of limiting or enlarging the course of study at their discretion. The questions were prepared so that they might serve a double purpose: (a) Give the pupil a general knowledge of the topic under consideration; and (b) Leave the way open for the teacher to give denominational doctrines if in his judgment the situation demanded it. For example, if the question in the larger type asked what people were expected to do after repentance, the child of any denomination could answer, "Be baptized." Then the questions in small type dealing with the meaning of repentance or baptism would give the teacher ample opportunity to give his own denominational emphasis.

Each verse was accompanied by two types of questions. First, easy questions printed in large type which might be answered by quoting the whole or a portion of the Scripture text. Second, more difficult questions were printed in small type, making it necessary for the pupils to understand the meaning of the passages which they had committed to memory.²⁰ An example follows:

WHO WAS THE WIFE OF ZACHARIAS?

Who was Aaron?

How could Elizabeth be called his daughter?

WHAT OFFICE DID ZACHARIAS PERFORM?

What was the priest's office?

WHERE DID HE BURN INCENSE?

Was the incense the same as burnt-offering?²¹

(4) *Examples of the Union Questions.* We have already called attention to the fact that the American Sunday School Union announced a cycle of lessons in 1827 which provided basic lesson

²⁰ *Union Questions*, vol. i, p. vii.

²¹ *Ibid.*, vol. i, Lesson I. The complete list of *Union Question Books* is as follows:

- Vol. I. History and Life of Christ.
- Vol. II. Parables and Other Instructions of Christ.
- Vol. III. Beginnings of Old Testament History.
- Vol. IV. History of Israel to the Death of Joshua.
- Vol. V. New Testament History from the Ascension of our Lord to the End of the Acts of the Apostles.
- Vol. VI. The History of the Israelites from the Death of Joshua to the Death of Samuel.
- Vol. VII. The History of the Israelites during the Time of Samuel, Chronicles, Kings.
- Vol. VIII. The Epistle to the Galatians.
- Vol. IX. Daniel, Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah.
- Vol. X. Romans.
- Vol. XI. The Epistle to the Hebrews.
- Vol. XII. General View of the Bible.

texts for a period of five years. This five-year cycle was extended to seven years and eventually to eleven years. A twelfth year was also added, which aimed at a general review and a comprehensive survey of the entire Bible.²² Examples of material, representative of this entire system of lesson helps, are included here. Since there are twelve volumes in the series, excerpts from only one of the books will be cited, and any changes or developments in the others will also be indicated in order to give a clear idea of the entire series.

Volume I contained the history of the life of Christ. Sections from two representative lessons are given here with three factors in mind: (1) The first lesson represents well the questions that call for reflection; (2) The second lesson is illustrative of the questions which were supposed to be plain and easy and which could be answered from the Bible text; and (3) The sections chosen are typical of all the lessons throughout the entire series.

LESSON XVII

The Storm Hushed—Devils Cast Out

Matt. VIII. 18-34

DID MANY PEOPLE GO TO SEE JESUS?

Why did they do this? Verse 16.

Where was Christ at this time? Verse 5.

WHERE DID HE WISH TO GO?

The other side of what?

On what sea was Capernaum?

WHO CAME TO HIM?

What was a scribe?

WHAT DID THE SCRIBE SAY?

WHAT DID JESUS SAY TO HIM?

What is the meaning of this answer?

Had not Christ a home in Nazareth?

Does he seem to have remained in any place long, after he began to preach?

How did Peter describe his manner of life? Acts X: 38.

Why is Christ called the *Son of man*?

Why is Christ called the *Son of God*?

How should the poor feel when they hear that Jesus had not where to lay his head?

For whose sake did Jesus undergo such hardships?²³

²² Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union*, p. 113.

²³ *Union Questions*, vol. i, pp. 62-63.

This lesson (XXI) is a good illustration of the easy questions which could be answered from the Scriptures. The first three questions connect the lesson with the previous one.

LESSON XXI

Death of John the Baptist

WHO IS CALLED THE FORERUNNER OF CHRIST?
 WHAT DID YOU HEAR OF JOHN IN THE LAST LESSON?
 HOW DID CHRIST ANSWER JOHN'S QUESTION ABOUT HIMSELF?

Matt. XI. 4, 5.

WHO HEARD OF CHRIST ABOUT THIS TIME?

How had Christ's name been spread abroad?

WHAT DID HEROD SAY?

What Herod was this?

What is he called in Matthew XIV. 1?

WHAT DID OTHERS SAY?

Whom did they mean by Elias? Mal. IV. 5.

How might all these people have known who Jesus really was? John V.

39, 40, 46, 47.

WHAT DID HEROD SAY?

What is meant by beheaded?

Why did Herod think John had risen from the dead?

WHAT HAD HEROD DONE TO JOHN?

WHY HAD HE DONE IT?²⁴

No deviation from the regular plan is found in Volumes I to V but Volume VI, dealing with the *History of the Israelites from the Death of Joshua to the Death of Samuel*, contains a smaller number of questions in small type, so that the teacher may have more time to discuss the various points of instruction. This volume has another peculiarity in that it is much richer in allusions to commentaries, Bible dictionaries, and helpful books bearing on the Bible. A few excerpts from several lessons will illustrate this feature:

LESSON XIX—SAMUEL

WHAT WAS THE ADVANTAGE OF HAVING THIS STRICT LAW?

(Numbers IV: 20).

HOW MANY WERE DESTROYED FOR THIS SIN?

Teacher had better consult a commentary on this passage.²⁵

LESSON XX

What idol was called Ashtaroth?

Consult a Bible Dictionary.²⁶

²⁴ *Union Questions*, vol. i, pp. 74-75.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. vi, p. 66.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

LESSON XXII

Can you give an account of the employment of asses by the ancients?

See Biblical Antiquities, Volume I, pages 47-49.²⁷

LESSON XXVIII—ANCESTRY OF DAVID

Both teacher and pupil will be much assisted in the lesson by the use of the work on the *Ancestry of David* by the American Sunday School Union.²⁸

The other volumes in the series do not vary enough from the general plan as illustrated by the sample from Volume I to merit further consideration.

(5) *Suggestions to teachers.* The *Union Questions* offered suggestions to teachers as to the best method of presentation. The teacher was advised to insist that the pupils commit the Scripture text to memory, making sure that this had been done by having the pupils repeat a verse in rotation until all the verses had been recited. The teacher was expected to ask the questions suggested in the book, and, in addition, any other questions that he might desire to ask. If the lesson proved too long, it was to be divided and covered in two Sundays. The teacher should make use of the examination periods (one a month) to test the pupils on the lessons studied. The teacher was also urged to spend a little time each Sunday in reviewing the preceding lesson, and to devote the fourth Sunday to a thorough review of all the lessons studied during the preceding three Sundays. When plenty of teachers were available, it was stated that no class have more than six pupils. The teacher or school was asked to urge each family to own a lesson book so that the pupils might study the lesson during the week.

(6) *Revision of the Union Questions.* It was the desire of the American Sunday School Union to correct and improve the publications whenever possible, and in the light of this policy the *Union Question Books* were revised and published in several editions.

Dr. Edwin Wilbur Rice describes the situation in these words: "The helps and *Union Questions* upon the system of uniform lessons were repeatedly revised, before the First National Sun-

²⁷ *Union Questions*, vol. vi, p. 75.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

day School Convention of 1832, and immediately after it, by John Hall, who was aided, in the final revision of the *Union Questions*, by a company of about fifty leading educators, to whom proofs of each volume were sent for revision and suggestion."²⁹ The result was that the volumes were rewritten on the basis of the criticisms and suggestions.

The revisions, however, were not fundamentally different from the original copies but consisted largely in shifting the order of lessons, and increasing or diminishing the number and wording of the questions. To get an idea of the revision of the *Union Questions* let us compare briefly certain extracts from the editions of 1830 and 1835, Volume V, *History of the Patriarchs*.

The order of lessons is not the same in both volumes, but, apparently, no consistent plan was followed in making the changes. For example, Lesson XI³⁰ in Volume V, published in 1830, is entitled, "Abraham Pleads for Sodom," while Lesson XI in Volume V, 1834, is entitled, "Abraham in Canaan," and Lesson XII is entitled, "Abraham Pleads for Sodom." Again Lesson XIX of Volume V, 1830, is entitled, "Joseph Sold by His Brethren," which is the title of Lesson XXI in the edition of 1834.

The questions also show some variation of treatment. Take, for example, Lesson I of Volume V, 1830:

GENESIS, CHAPTER I, VERSES 1-13

*The Creation*³¹

What is the first book of the Bible called?

What is the meaning of the word Genesis?

Ans. *Generation*—See the Bible Dictionary published by the American Sunday School Union, words, *Generation* and *Bible*, where a full explanation is given, together with an entire history of the Bible.

Who wrote the book of Genesis?

What other parts of the Bible were written by him?

What are these five books called?

Ans. *Pentateuch* or *Five Books*.

From whence did Moses get his knowledge of all these things?

Exod. XXVIII. 11; Deuteronomy XXIV. 10.

²⁹ Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union*, p. 113.

³⁰ *Union Questions*, vol. v, p. 41.

³¹ No attempt is made here to represent the two sizes of type but only to call attention to the questions in two lessons, so that the revision will be apparent.

When were the Heaven and earth created?
 What is meant here by the beginning?
 By whom were they created?³²

Now let us examine a part of the same lesson from the revised edition of 1834.

LESSON I
The Creation

Genesis I: 1-13.

What is the first book of the Bible called?
 What is the meaning of the word Genesis?
 Who wrote the book of Genesis?
 What other parts of the Bible were written by Moses?
 What are the five books called? (Pentateuch or Five Books.)
 From whence did Moses get his knowledge of all these things? 2 Tim. III. 16.
 When were the heavens and earth created?
 What is meant here by *the* beginning? What is meant by the Heaven?³³

It is evident that the revisions are relatively slight, but sufficient, it was thought, to justify the rewriting of the volume. The questions show but little variation either in order or wording, but the answers of the first edition are not listed in the revised copy. The extract given here is a fair example of the changes in the two volumes and demonstrates the fact already stated that the revisions of the *Union Questions* were not fundamental.

(7) *Adoption and use.* The *Union Questions* had a wide circulation. Edwin Wilbur Rice says: "The reputation of this system of uniform lessons of 1826 and onward, and of the lesson books thereon, is indicated by the circulation which they attained, running into hundreds of thousands of copies and totaling some millions."³⁴ This is to be expected: first, because of the widespread usage of the *Selected Scripture Lessons*, upon which the *Union Questions* were based; and, second, because of the insistent demand on the part of teachers for a specific lesson guide.

Perhaps the popularity of the *Union Questions* is best attested by the action of the National Sunday School Conventions.³⁵ The conventions of 1832 and 1833 commended the question books as

³² *Union Questions*, vol. v, 1830, p. 5.

³³ *Ibid.*, 1834, p. 7.

³⁴ Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union*, p. 113.

³⁵ For a description of National Sunday School Conventions see Cope, Henry F., *The Evolution of the Sunday School*, chap. viii.

the best system of helps in existence.³⁶ The National Convention of 1859 requested the American Sunday School Union to revise and reissue the *Union Questions*, which were even then considered well adapted to the older groups of pupils in most of the Sunday schools of the United States.³⁷

The Consecutive Union Questions. Under this title another system of helps came into the Sunday-school field.

(1) *Origin and object of the plan.* In addition to the *Selected Lessons* and the *Union Questions* based on them, the American Sunday School Union issued an additional selected Scripture system, known as the *Consecutive Union Questions*. This series, although actually belonging to the next period in point of time,³⁸ should be considered here because of its close connection with the *Union Questions* and the *Selected Scripture Lessons*.

In the preface of the first volume it is stated that in a general way the new question books are similar to the *Union Questions*, but that they differ in the following respect: "Instead of taking the events and the instructions recorded in the several Gospels as so many distinct and independent subjects of instruction, it is proposed to take each Gospel by itself and, following the order of events as they stand in the history, divide the text into lessons of suitable length and frame opportune questions thereon. By this system the whole gospel narrative may be brought into view at once, and it gives a complete history of Christ and of his miracles and teachings as given by each of the Gospels."³⁹ This differs from the aim of Volumes I and II of the *Union Questions*, for they were intended to bring into a connected view the chief transactions of the life of Jesus on earth, as they are recorded by any of the evangelists or all of them, drawing from one Gospel to supply the omissions or to connect or illustrate the statements of the others. The *Consecutive Questions*, on the other hand, aimed to set forth the life and teachings of Jesus as given by each of the evangelists separately.

(2) *The content of the Consecutive Questions.* The first course,

³⁶ Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union*, p. 121.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

³⁸ The Series began in 1846.

³⁹ Consecutive Union Question Book, vol. i, preface.

based on Matthew, contained sixty-one lessons; the second, on Mark, thirty-nine lessons; the third, on Luke, fifty-eight lessons; and the fourth, on John, and contained forty-seven lessons.

The plan of lessons and questions is exactly the same throughout the entire series, so that an extract from any one lesson is typical of all. A lesson from the second course, based upon Mark, has been chosen for the purpose of illustrating the lesson content:

LESSON XIV

The Miraculous Increase of Food

Mark VI. 30-44

30. WHO CAME TO JESUS?
What did they do?
31. WHAT DID HE SAY TO THEM?
What is meant by a desert place?
FOR WHAT PURPOSE DID THEY GO THITHER?
32. HOW DID THEY GO TO THE DESERT PLACE?
33. WHAT DID THE PEOPLE DO WHEN THEY SAW THEM DEPARTING?
34. WHAT WERE CHRIST'S FEELINGS WHEN HE SAW THE MULTITUDE?
In what sense were they as sheep without a shepherd?
35. TO WHAT TIME, AS FAR PASSED, DID THE DISCIPLES REFER?
36. WHAT DID THEY PROPOSE TO HAVE DONE WITH THE MULTITUDE?
37. WHAT DID CHRIST DIRECT THEM TO DO?
WHAT DID THE DISCIPLES REPLY?
Are we to suppose that two hundred pennyworth of bread would have supplied the multitude?
38. WHAT QUANTITY OF PROVISIONS HAD THEY IN HAND?
- 39.—40. WHAT DID CHRIST DIRECT?
Why was this particular order prescribed?
41. WHAT DID CHRIST DO WHEN HE HAD TAKEN THE FIVE LOAVES AND THE TWO FISHES?
Are we to suppose he sought a blessing which he could not bestow on himself?
Are we to suppose that the fishes were distributed any differently than the bread?
42. Did the supply suffice?
43. What quantity of fragments remained?
How much more was this than the supply at first?⁴⁰

A comparison of the *Consecutive Union Questions* with the *Union Questions* shows certain likenesses and differences. The

⁴⁰ *Consecutive Union Questions*, vol. ii, p. 44.

same plan of questioning is retained; that is, some of the questions may be answered from the Scripture text and others require independent thought on the part of the pupil. There are fewer of the second type of questions in the *Consecutive Union Questions*. There appears to be but little difference in the length and difficulty of the questions asked in the two series.

ESTIMATE OF THE LESSON HELPS

It is our purpose here to evaluate the worth of the several systems of lesson helps. This may be done by a consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of the scheme as a whole.

Positive values of the lesson helps. It is obvious that any system of lesson helps would be better than none at all. Certain advantages of lesson helps are indicated here.

1. The *Selected Scripture Lessons* and the various systems of helps based upon them caused modification in the method of memorization. Previous to the use of these helps the pupils had selected verses promiscuously, attention being focused on the amount of material memorized rather than understanding. Under the new plan the pupils were expected to memorize the basic text suggested in the question book, which would later be used in the class period.

2. The question book, with its arrangement of questions, supplied a method by which the teacher was able to furnish instruction on the limited number of verses selected. It was not expected that the plan should be followed slavishly by the teacher, but, rather, that it serve at least as a guide, subject to the teacher's modification.

3. The lesson helps in all instances represent a recognition of the capacities of children. For example, Judson prepared three sets of questions, and in his instructions to teachers urged them to give the easier questions to the younger pupils or those who for any reason were less advanced. The "rival system" of questions was divided into two grades, one set simple and easy, and the other more difficult. The *Union* and *Consecutive Questions* followed the same principle and arranged one set of questions which the children could answer from the lesson

verse, and another type of question calling for reflection and the exercise of judgment. The teacher was urged to ask the questions assigned to the age and capacity of the pupils.

4. A different purpose motivated the new system of lesson study. The previous method of Bible study had been commercialized by the giving of tickets, prizes, and rewards. The new method, instead of appealing to a keen but quite worldly rivalry, succeeded in turning the attention to the study of the lesson for its intrinsic worth.⁴¹

5. The system of lesson helps provided a method by which the pupil could acquire a more complete knowledge of the Bible than was possible under previous methods of merely memorizing large portions of Scripture. The new system provided for verse analysis and a study of commentaries, which would make it possible for the pupils to acquire much information about the biblical material.

The limitations of the plan. On the other hand, the lesson helps had serious weaknesses, which may be indicated as follows:

1. The lesson helps provided a uniform lesson for each class, which was thought to be adapted to the capacities of the various pupils.

2. All the lesson helps centered in the objective material rather than in the needs and interests of human life. Their object was to make it possible for the teacher to impart information about the Bible.

3. The lessons were too difficult for the younger children, unprepared for the study of biblical geography and history, especially since these lessons had little or no connection with the life problems of the children.

4. Many of the questions themselves were poor, too general, and ambiguous. For example, Lesson XIX of the Judson Questions, Volume I, contains as the opening question, "Whom did Jesus call to him?" and the following sentence is, "What did he give them?" In the *New Series of Questions on the Select Scripture Lessons for Sabbath Schools*, Lesson XVIII had this question: "Are little children, then, exposed to death?" It is

⁴¹ Owen, *Plans and Motives for the Extension of Sabbath Schools*, p. 10.

followed by another that is likely to create fear: "Are you ready for death?" Not only may the form of the questions be seriously criticized, but the content also, for often the questions tended to inculcate fear rather than love and comradeship.

In sum, the lesson helps were prepared for teachers to aid them in expounding the *Selected Scripture Lessons*. They took the form of questions since the catechetical method was the accepted method of that day. The Rev. Albert Judson was the first to prepare a series of questions on the limited Scripture lessons, but a rival set of questions was soon published anonymously by the Sunday-school superintendent of Princeton, New Jersey, already referred to in this chapter. The American Sunday School Union, desiring a unified set of helps, secured the copyrights of the two lesson helps and delegated Mr. Harvey Fisk to combine the best elements of each into one scheme. The result was Volumes I and II of the *Union Questions*, a system of helps later extended to twelve volumes in length. In addition to the *Union Questions*, the American Sunday School Union published another series of helps in four courses called *The Consecutive Union Questions*, which were confined entirely to the Gospels.

CHAPTER IX

THE "BABEL" PERIOD

THE *Verse-A-Day Plan* popular about 1831 is not usually treated as a part of the "Babel" period. But, since the plan is essentially a sporadic revival of a discarded principle, it seems in nature allied to the spirit of the "Babel" period with its frequent changes and often inconsistent attempts to supply curriculum material; in other words, it was one of many experiments in adapting religious training to the conditions of a changing age.

When the *Selected Scripture Lessons* and the *Union Questions* took such complete control of the Sunday-school curriculum following 1828, it appeared that the new system had won an impregnable place. However, about 1831, the *Selected Scripture Lesson* system met with a slight reversion to the memoriter plan represented in the *Verse-A-Day Plan*.

ORIGIN OF THE PLAN

The Moravians had long had a plan by which they assigned a single, specific verse for each day of the week, and the seven verses of the week thus selected and committed to memory were used as the Sunday-school lesson on the following Sabbath.¹

In 1831 the Sunday-school Teachers' Association of Oswego County, New York, adopted the plan and asked all Sunday schools within that organization to follow it. The Oswego Association decided to begin the plan on January 17, 1831, with the first verse of the eleventh chapter of the Gospel of John. Like the Moravians, the teachers' association proposed to follow the biblical order. The pupils were to commit a verse to memory each day, the seven verses together comprising the Sunday-school lesson for the week.

¹ Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *Important and Remarkable Epochs in the History of Sunday Schools*, not paged.

The Oswego Teachers' Association invited the American Sunday School Union and other Sunday-school societies to study the plan and requested the secular religious papers to print, each week in advance, the lesson of seven verses.² It also provided a blank form which explained the plan and allowed space for recording the number, name, age, residence, lesson, and date of beginning for all members of the family and of every person in the school who joined the *Verse-A-Day Plan*.

INDORSEMENTS OF THE SCHEME

In 1831 the *American Sunday School Magazine* indorsed the plan through its editorial columns and printed the blank provided by the Oswego County Sunday School Teachers' Association.

The *Sunday School Journal*, a weekly publication of the American Sunday School Union, published the verses and indorsed the plan as a supplement to but not as a substitute for the *Selected Lessons* sponsored by the Union. On April 20, 1831, the *Sunday School Journal* referred to the plan as the "Perpetual Bible Lesson" or "Verse-A-Day System." This issue of the *Journal* has the following statement: "We shall publish each week, regularly, the verses for the succeeding month, but we have only room at present to say that the verse for April 21 is John XII. 38. 'That the saying of Esaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord who hath believed our report? And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?' "³ The *Sunday School Journal* on April 27, 1831, published the Verse-A-Day Plan for a month as promised in the previous issue. The lessons for the first week of the month were as follows:

Wednesday, April 27. Jesus cried, and said, he that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.

Thursday, April 28. And he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me.

Friday, April 29. I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

Saturday, April 30. And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.

² Sampey, John Richard, *The International Lesson System*, p. 58. Fleming H. Revell Company, publishers.

³ *The Sunday School Journal*, April 20, 1831, p. 71.

Sunday, May 1. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him on the last day.

Monday, May 2. For I have not spoken of myself, but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, which I should say, and what I should speak.

Tuesday, May 3. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.⁴

The *Sunday School Journal* of May 25, 1831 discontinued publishing the verses for a month, and published them just one week in advance.⁵

Lesson helps on the Verse-A-Day Plan. Since the scheme was published without question, note, or comment there was a need for lesson helps, as there had been in the case of the *Selected Lessons*. To meet this demand, Charles Hall edited a book called *The Daily Verse Expositor*.

The verses for 1832 were found in the Acts of the Apostles and Hall's book attempted to explain the verse for each day. An example is cited here which will give an idea of his method of treatment:

Monday

Feb. 27. Chap. 1: 17. "And he said unto them, it is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power."

Times—seasons. The former of these words refers to great periods such as centuries, years, etc.; the latter, to smaller and more exact periods—the particular days, occasions, etc.

Hath put in his own power. That is, has reserved them to be regulated by his own wisdom and authority. It is enough for the disciples of Christ, that they know their duties, and have an assurance of all needed assistance, and of final success. Nor need we be anxious about the particular times when his promise shall be fulfilled, since these are all ordered by one infinitely wiser and better than ourselves.⁶

Estimate of the plan. The *Verse-A-Day Plan* was a decidedly retrograde movement. It had at least the following weaknesses.

1. It was a return to a system of memorizing verses. True, the amount of material to be memorized was limited, but the

⁴ *The Sunday School Journal*, April 20, 1831, p. 73.

⁵ *Ibid.*, May 25, 1831, p. 89.

⁶ Hall, Charles, *The Daily Verse Expositor*, 1832, p. 14.

main objective was to memorize the Bible rather than to get at a full understanding of the verses committed.

2. The only helps provided were in the nature of expositions such as those which appeared in the *Daily Verse Expositor*. In the case of inexperienced teachers, these helps probably resulted only in the teacher's reciting the comments to the children. Experienced teachers were probably able to make use of these helps in connection with their own lesson plan.

3. The plan did not provide for any psychological approach to the Bible but was committed to the mechanical system of going through the Bible verse by verse. All the verses were to be memorized regardless of value to the child's life at that given moment.

4. It was a very unsatisfactory plan even of memorizing the Bible, as it would take approximately eighty-two years to cover the Bible at the rate of a verse a day.

5. The system was far inferior to the question book in that the *Verse-A-Day Plan* provided no opportunity for discovery of problems on the part of the pupils. With the question book, the pupil did have a guide in searching for the answer, but even this was lacking in the *Verse-A-Day Plan*.

Summary

The verse-a-day scheme, according to Doctor Rice, had been in use among the Moravians for a long time.⁷ The plan was adopted by the Oswego Teachers' Association in 1831 without any modifications and urged on the American Sunday-schools of the country. The American Sunday School Union through the *American Sunday School Magazine* indorsed the plan, and the *Sunday School Journal*, its weekly periodical, published the verses a week in advance. In 1832 Charles Hall published the *Daily Verse Expositor* to explain the verses which, for that year, were taken from the *Book of Acts*.

The plan represents a retrograde movement to the memoriter method previous to 1825, but it did not become widespread enough in its use to displace the *Selected Lessons* or the *Union*

⁷ Rice, Edwin Wilbur, Personal letter to the Rev. James McConnaughey, May, 1925.

Questions, for both the National Conventions of 1832 and 1833 placed themselves on record as believing that the systems just noted above were the best plans before the Sunday-school world.

The years from 1840 to 1872 in the history of the American Sunday-school curriculum are usually referred to as the "Babel" period.⁸ The *Selected Scripture Lesson*, so promising from about 1825 to 1840, gave way to a period of decline, and a decided lack of uniformity of curriculum materials.

CAUSES OF THE "BABEL" PERIOD

Several factors help to explain the confusion of the "Babel" period. The *Selected Scripture System*, as contained in the *Union Question Books*, fell into considerable disfavor around 1830 and 1831.⁹ The *Verse-A-Day Plan*, which was a backward step to former days, caused at least a considerable reaction against the *Selected Scripture Lessons*. The American Sunday School Union, by indorsing the *Verse-A-Day Plan*, and later by issuing the *Consecutive Union Questions*, opened up the way to new and further attempts in curriculum making. The various denominations also had come to a more definite Sunday-school consciousness. They were forming denominational unions, and their publishing houses were more adequately attempting to meet the needs of the Sunday-school pupils.¹⁰ Following the lead of the *Selected Scripture Lesson* system, the denominations began to issue lesson plans of their own execution. Private publishers competed with the Sunday School Union and the denominational publishing houses in placing on the market their rival schemes. Thus, various systems sprang up, independent lessons took the field, denominational presses attempted to serve their pupils, and the result of it all was confusion and lack of unity. Well has the period been called "Babel."

THE MATERIAL OF THE "BABEL" PERIOD

In these years flourished the question book, small enough to

⁸ Cope, Henry F., *The Evolution of the Sunday School*, p. 103.

⁹ The scheme proved long and tedious and students lost interest.

¹⁰ A condensed treatment of the denominational activities is found in Henry F. Cope's book entitled, *The Evolution of the Sunday School*, pp. 87-90.

fit readily into one's pocket. It represents an attempt to provide an organized system of Bible study, including occasional doctrinal teaching.¹¹ Whether the system of lessons covered one year or several, or whether issued by the Sunday School Unions, denominational presses, or private individuals, all lesson series practically throughout the entire period 1825-1864 took the form of a question book. This is true of the *Selected Scripture Lessons*, *Union Questions*, and the *Consecutive Questions*. In the "Babel" period, the question book was the representative type of Sunday-school material. Some of the typical lesson plans will be noted.

Harvey Newcomb's plan of lessons. The lessons by Newcomb were printed and promoted by the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society. Volume I is entitled *Scripture Questions*, with lessons chosen from the Epistle of Paul to the Romans. The book has a general preface, a note to parents calling their attention to their responsibility, a note to teachers, explanations, and general directions. After a page of abbreviations used in the book, the lessons (fifty-two in all) follow. This course places special emphasis upon the doctrinal section of Romans. Lesson III, for example, deals with the universal depravity and guilt of the Gentiles (Romans 1.18-23.)

What is revealed from Heaven?

What does revealed mean?

Against what is the wrath of God revealed from Heaven?

What is wrath?

With whom is God displeased all the time? John 3:36, Ps. 7:11.

Would you like to have your father angry with you every day?

How then should sinners feel, who are under the wrath of God all the time?

Why is the wrath of God revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men? Verse 19.

What is manifest in or to them?

What does manifest mean?

Who has showed all men that which may be known of God?

What are clearly seen from the creation of the world?

By what are the invisible things of God understood? Ps. 19:1-6.

What does invisible mean?

Can the heathen, who have no Bible, see God's works?

What might they learn about him from the things that are made?

¹¹ An example here is the *Topical Question Book*, by Joseph Banvard. The lessons in this book embrace the doctrines and duties more immediately related to the plan of salvation, and although the range of concepts is more narrow than the usual catechism, because of the particular theme of the book, the treatment is not unlike the lessons in any doctrinal catechism.

Have they any excuse, then, for living in sin?

If the heathen are without excuse, what do you think of those who have the Bible, and go to Sabbath school, and hear the Gospel, and yet live in sin? Which will fare the better in the day of judgment, the heathen, who never heard of Jesus, or the Sabbath scholar, who will not come to him? Matt. 10: 15.¹²

In this particular lesson there were, in all, seventy-nine major questions, of which thirteen are quoted here. The questions are designed to explain God's wrath, to describe those against whom he is angry, and to point out a way of escape.

Lesson VI has as the title "God No Respector of Persons," with questions designed to show that God is no respector of persons, the necessity of obedience, God's judgment on the world, necessity of revelation, and how to be saved from the awful condemnation. The method of treatment is exactly like Lesson III already examined; in fact, this method prevails throughout the book.

Lesson XLIII is entitled "Exhortations to Various Duties." This lesson seeks to help the pupil to become conscious of his duty to God; to understand the meaning of entire consecration and the dangers which particularly surround consecrated people.¹³ It attempts to explain also how a transformation of character can and should come to a pupil. Other questions are designed to help the pupil to find out what other duties are enjoined in the chapter from which the lesson is taken and how to adjust his life in the light of them.¹⁴

In this book the questions are of two kinds: first, those intended to stimulate a careful study of the Scriptures, and, secondly, those planned to stimulate thought. We need only to refer to Lesson III for examples of the latter, as follows:

On the supposition that Paul believed the heathen could be saved without a gospel, how can you account for his enduring so much to carry it to them?

Suppose a number of criminals equally guilty and all deserving of death, if one of them should be pardoned, would an injustice be done to the rest?¹⁵

¹² Newcomb, Harvey, *Scripture Questions*, pp. 20-21.

¹³ That is, temptations to backsliding and so forth.

¹⁴ Newcomb, Harvey, *Scripture Questions*, pp. 191-194.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

It was found, by experience, that *Scripture Questions*, Volume I, was too difficult for smaller children. To meet this situation Mr. Newcomb prepared in 1837 a *First Question Book* for those pupils not ready for a study of the book of Romans. The book really consisted of two volumes and was topically arranged. The first volume embraced the principal truths and doctrines of the Scriptures, systematically presented, and the second contained the more practical duties toward God and man which are set forth in the Scriptures. A typical lesson is given in part here, to illustrate the method, style, phraseology, and difficulty of this lesson book.

Four Scripture verses, Exodus 20:8-11 furnish the scriptural basis for the questions, and they are quoted at the beginning of the lesson treatment:

LESSON XXI

The Sabbath

Q. What must we remember?

How must we remember the Sabbath day?

Why do you suppose God said, *remember*, and not *thou shalt*, when He commanded the children of Israel to keep the Sabbath? Genesis 2: 2, 3.

Do any of the other Commandments begin with *remember*?

Can we *remember* anything that we have never known?

If there had been no Sabbath day before, do you think God would have told them to *remember* it?

What did He tell them to do six days?

If God has commanded us to work six days, is it right for us to be idle?

What does Solomon say about people that are idle? Proverbs 19: 15.

What does Paul say about those that will not work? 2nd Thess. 3: 10.

What must we do in six days?

If six days are given us to do *all our work* in, is it right to do any of it on the Sabbath, which could be done on any other day?¹⁸

In this lesson there are in all sixty questions, of which twelve are listed here. The questions make it clear that the pupils are to discover God's command concerning the Sabbath, the work on other days, how to keep the Sabbath, and reasons for observing the day. Other chapters in the book deal with such topics as "God," "God Knows All Things," "God Is Great and Good," "Jesus," "Jesus the Saviour," "The Temptation and the Fall,"

¹⁸ Newcomb, Harvey, *First Question Book*, vol. i, Revised Edition, 1838, pp. 50-51.

“The Curse,” “Profane Swearing,” and “Brothers and Sisters Must Live Together in Harmony.”

The catechetical method is used only in part, since answers to the questions are not included. The pupils are to find the answers in the Scriptures and to secure a mastery of the verses which have been used as the basis of study. Although the book was planned for the young child, it is suggested that older classes may profitably use the material and extend the scope of the subjects included in the course. Mr. Newcomb was interested in having the pupil reason as well as memorize, for in the preface of this volume he protested against memorizing materials which are thought to possess value merely for the sake of future use. He held that it was an error to make it the chief object in memorizing to commit long sections or even shorter one son the basis of their future use.¹⁷ In this connection he said that such a method of teaching has led to the tedious exercises of memory. They (the pupils) have been required to commit to memory those things that contain no intelligible ideas to their understanding. We should aim to affect the heart. Children must be taught to think as well as memorize.¹⁸

As far as we are able to ascertain, the complete series prepared by Newcomb consisted of seventeen volumes in addition to the *First Question Book*, the beginning book of the entire plan. The books all follow the same plan of treatment as the two here discussed. They were, indeed, question books on the Bible. For further example, Volume V, dealing with the book of Genesis chronologically and in catechetical form, was published in 1841. Volumes VI, VII, and VIII contain the “Gospels in Harmony.”

The question books by Newcomb are among the best of that kind of material. They include a carefully worked-out table of abbreviations, a preface giving the plan of the book, suggestions for the study of the lessons, and suggestions to teachers. The Scripture verses which form the basis of the questions are quoted at the beginning of the lessons. Memorization is not stressed to the exclusion of reason and thought. Mr. Newcomb

¹⁷ Newcomb, Harvey, *First Question Book*, preface.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

would have children *think* rather than *cram*. One of the distinctive features of this series is the thought-provoking question, rarely found in this period. For example, in the *First Question Book*, the lesson, "God is a Spirit," includes the following:

Can you think and know?
Is it your head that thinks and knows?
Is it your hands?
What part of you is it that thinks and knows?¹⁹

Other questions draw the student to an examination of the Bible text itself. For example, in Lesson II of this same book are found the following:

How does the Lord search us? Ps. 11: 4.
What part of us does He search? I Chron. 28: 9.
What has God known of us? I Kings 8: 39; Ps. 44: 21.²⁰

As previously indicated the Harvey Newcomb lessons were printed and promoted by the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society. Since this organization, created in 1832 as an agency of the Congregational Church, made such an important contribution to this period through publications and periodicals, some notice should be given to its work.

In 1833 the Society began the publication of the *Sabbath School Visitor*, a monthly periodical for teachers and pupils. In 1835 it published the *Shorter Catechism* and shortly afterward a volume of exercises on the catechism making use of paraphrase and explanatory notes, in the hope that even young children might comprehend the doctrines of the faith. It was pointed out in Chapter VI that following 1835 there was a period of renewed interest in the study of doctrinal catechisms. Undoubtedly, the efforts of the Massachusetts Society in publishing the catechism and other books that give it a wider circulation did much to sustain the revived interest in doctrinal studies. In 1836 the Society republished the *New England Primer*.²¹

¹⁹ Newcomb, Harvey, *First Question Book*, Revised Edition, p. 9.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

²¹ *A Brief History of the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society and of the Rise and Progress of Sabbath Schools in the Orthodox Congregational Denomination*, p. 11.

In the same year the Society began to publish the *Question Books for Sabbath Schools*, by Harvey Newcomb. Also, in the same year (1836), this Society made possible the beginning of a series of biblical catechisms (eventually including eight volumes) for infant Sunday schools. In 1839, to meet the demand for suitable material for very small children, the Society began to publish the *Infant Series*, which was extended to sixteen packages, each package containing twelve different books. By 1850 the series included one hundred and ninety-two different booklets.

In sum, therefore, the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society published lessons, a paper for teachers and pupils, infant lessons, and exercises on the *Shorter Catechism*. The work of this Society was especially felt throughout New England, where the Congregational Church was dominant. The lesson series, particularly by Harvey Newcomb, were of a high grade, as far as lesson material for that period went, and merit commendation in comparison with other Sunday-school question books of the early "Babel" period.

Story and narrative treatments of the Bible. An anonymous book of this character was *Journeyings of Abraham and His Descendants* (1856). This volume, unlike the question books, is in narrative form, rather than catechetical, as most question books were. It deals with the incidents in the life of Abraham and his descendants, and, instead of being divided into lessons, forms a continuous narrative of Abraham's travels, his sons, Jacob's sons, the trip to Egypt, sojourn in Egypt, journeys in the wilderness, entrance into Canaan, and a brief description of the Hebrew monarchy and the two kingdoms, Israel and Judah. The book, the author says in the preface, grew out of a request of a Bible class in New York and was designed for families and schools of biblical instruction, and for the assistance of Sunday-school teachers.

Another anonymous work of like nature but planned more especially for children was entitled *Line Upon Line*. The author of this book aimed to make the Scriptures delightful as well as understandable. He chose the most interesting biographies and incidents in the Bible from the story of creation

to the death of Joshua. Chapter I tells the story of Creation according to the biblical account. The narrative is followed by a poem of five stanzas. Chapter II gives the details of the sin of Adam and Eve. This narrative section is followed by a poem of seven stanzas. Chapter III tells the story of Cain and Abel. The Bible story is here retold in simple terms with such additions as are needed to make the narrative understandable and interesting to children. Then follows a poem of six stanzas. Other chapters deal with the Flood, "Joseph the Slave, Prisoner and Lord of Egypt," "Moses the Deliverer of a Race," and "Joshua and His Conquests."

The poems included emphasized the central thought of the lesson with which they were used. The book contained questions on the various chapters, not in the nature of thought questions but for the purpose of aiding the child in gaining information and in fixing facts in his mind. As the book was interestingly written it probably appealed to children.

A semibiblical commentary. Another lesson book for Sunday schools and families was prepared by Caroline R. Wright.²² The volume is organized into the following main divisions: "Bible," "Six Ages," "Miracles," "Prophecies," "Jerusalem," and "Biblical Characters."

The lesson on the Bible, in question-and-answer form, stated that God makes his will known through the Bible. It then proceeds to define Canon, Bible, Inspiration, Divisions of the Sacred Scriptures, Meaning of Testament, Languages Used, Translations, and the reason why the book was given to man. Next, the "Six Ages" are considered in question-and-answer form. The First Age extends from Creation to the Deluge, including such events and topics as the creation of man, the abode of our first parents, the fall of Adam, the promise of a Saviour, the translation of Enoch, the long life of Methuselah and others, and the deluge of the earth by water.²³ The other five ages are described in like manner; and under each of these, as under the "first age" noted above, the chief occurrences are listed.

²² Wright, Caroline R., *Scripture Lessons For Sabbath School and Families*.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

The next section is devoted to the Old Testament miracles. Here miracles are defined and offered as proof of the authenticity of the Bible. The purpose of miracles is pointed out and the power by which they are wrought is explained. After this preliminary section the actual miracles are enumerated and discussed. Then follows a section on the New Testament miracles. Here it is emphasized that most of the New Testament miracles were wrought by Christ and his apostles. The actual miracles are then pointed out and discussed as to their facts, the circumstances that called them forth, and the book or books where they may be found.

Lessons on the prophecies of the Old Testament make up the next section. Prophecy is defined and the prophets are set apart as different from other men, with the statement that the prophecies of greatest importance to the world are those concerning the Redeemer. The books where such prophecies occur are listed. The lesson closes with an arrangement in chronological order of the prophecies concerning the advent of the Saviour.

The next section is devoted to the city of Jerusalem. Facts are given concerning its name, location, capture from the Jebusites, improvements made by David, the building enterprises of Solomon, the separation of the Northern from the Southern Kingdom and the kings of each section.

The final section of the book deals with the character of the New Testament writers such as Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter, John and Jude.

The book as a whole gives much historical information, purely biblical, and defines such terms as Canon, Bible, Inspiration, and Prophecy. Because it is more than the usual lesson book, we have called it a semicommentary. It contains many pictures, as, for example, the "Temple of Solomon," "Wyclif and His Judges," "Levites Carrying the Ark and the Tabernacle." The style is clear with an attempt at adaptation to youthful minds. There is no evidence to show that it was used widely, but, judging from its value, we might assume a considerable circulation.

A popular treatment of the Ten Commandments. A story

book on the Ten Commandments²⁴ provided very readable material for the young. The plan of this book was to build each lesson about a commandment used as the starting point. Sometimes there were exhortations, again there were stories and illustrations. Take, for example, the lesson on the seventh commandment. Here is presented a vivid picture of a boy addicted to swearing to such a degree that it was not decent to associate with him. The author describes his own attempts, met by insult and contempt, to reform the boy, and concludes the story by telling of the young man's death, in which he shrieked that devils were tearing out his heart. Finally there is the exhortation not to be like that boy.

The book, written in colorful language, must have made a strong appeal to the readers, especially when presented by a dramatic teacher. However, the material is faulty in that it portrays an awful, angry God. Besides, it tries to get children to look at the world as adults. In one place, a certain little girl is described as not liking Sunday. Of her the author said, "She would like Sunday if she loved God." It is difficult to understand how one could expect children to love a day built on such an abstract principle. Yet, this kind of book, because it was written in story form and in language more appealing to children, far surpasses the old type of question-and-answer book that merely gave fact information about the Commandments.

The system of lessons by Orange Judd. Near the close of the "Babel" period appeared a very acceptable system of lessons under the direction of Orange Judd, a famous editor of agricultural papers, much interested in the religious education of the young. The lessons for every Sunday in the year were taken from the historical and prophetic books, the Epistles, and the Psalms. The lessons were arranged chronologically, with a brief, connected history or résumé of the entire Old and New Testaments.

Volume I. The Four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles.

Volume II. From the Birth of Christ to Revelation.

Volume III. The Period from Adam to Elijah.

Volume IV. The Period From Elijah to Christ.

²⁴ Cross, Jonathan, *Stories and Illustrations of the Ten Commandments*.

The volumes, three and a quarter by five and a half inches in dimensions, were bound in the blue of the old Webster Spelling Book. In the preface Mr. Judd describes the origin of his lessons:

"It is very desirable that as much as possible of the Word of God should be committed to memory in early life. Any portion of the sacred text learned in childhood or youth enters, so to speak, into the very texture of the mind, and forms a part of the staple of thought in after life. Experience has proved that from seven to ten verses are about all that children of average intellect can be readily induced to learn at one time. But in the method ordinarily pursued this amount carries a school over a small portion of a single Gospel before changes of superintendent, teacher, class, or textbook break up the regular history; to say nothing of the fact that none of the four Gospels gives a regular chronological history, or of the fact that in this way the interesting and important history of the church contained in the Acts is seldom reached at all."²⁵

The concluding section of Judd's preface follows:

- I. The titles of the lessons are thrown together on page six, where they are all presented to the eye in regular order.
- II. The calendar of Sundays, on page seven, with the numbers, shows what lesson is set down for each Sunday in any year in which the book is used.
- III. Each lesson is complete on two pages, opening together. The text of the lesson is printed in full at the head, with the probable time and place of its occurrence.

²⁵ Judd, Orange, *Lessons For Every Sunday in the Year*, vol i, preface. Mr. Judd says: "To remedy these defects, I attempted some fifteen years ago to arrange a series of short lessons on a new plan, and have made out several such series from time to time, but without getting anything exactly satisfactory until I submitted that matter to Dr. James Strong, author of the well known *Harmony of the Gospels* and other biblical works. He, with much labor and care, prepared a series of fifty-two lessons, embracing in chronological order some of the leading events and doctrines of the New Testament, which I have found to be admirably adapted to the purpose and which has already come into extensive use. The description of such events in the Gospels is taken from that evangelist who gives the best account within the required number of consecutive verses. I put a printed copy of this series into the hands of every teacher and scholar in my school, with a double purpose: first, each one then knows without fail where the lesson for every Sunday is to be found; and, secondly, the several events and subjects stand before the eye in their regular order and become fixed in the mind. A second series of similar lessons, embracing intervening subjects from the Gospels and the Acts and selections from the Epistles in their chronological place in the history, has been prepared by the same hand, for use after the first series has been completed in the school.

"After I had printed some twenty thousand copies of this table of lessons for the use of my own school and other schools which had adopted them, I received numerous urgent requests for a question book adapted to them." In collaboration with Doctor Olin and Dr. James Strong the four volumes of questions were prepared.

- IV. A very important item is the condensed history, connecting each lesson with the preceding. In this manner the entire New Testament history is epitomized in chronological order.
- V. In large type are the most obvious questions on the text, such as can be readily answered by small children.
- VI. In smaller type are a series of interesting questions directly and indirectly connected with the lesson. It will be seen that an answer is given to every question at all difficult, either in words or by a Scripture reference. This will be a very material aid to the great mass of teachers, who are not supplied with commentaries and other helps. The amount of information given in these questions and answers is very large, and much of it is so valuable and attractive, and withal so new, that the book will be inviting and instructive for perusal by the old as well as the young.

Giving all credit of the execution of the plan of the work to Doctor Strong and Doctor Olin, I am very free to say this is by far the most perfect Sunday-school book which I have yet found. It is not only a question book, covering in the compass of a single year the most essential parts of the whole New Testament, and adapted to all classes of scholars, but is also a chronology, a history and a commentary combined. That it may largely assist in the great work of instructing the youth in the sacred text is the earnest wish and prayer of
Your Colaborer in Christ,

ORANGE JUDD.²⁶

Since the books in the series are all built on the same general plan, Volume II will be studied in detail. According to the preface, this book is adapted to pupils of all ages. In the two paragraphs of notes and suggestions to superintendents and teachers it is stated that the book is planned to follow the first series, but is complete in itself and may be used independently. This volume covers the entire New Testament from the birth of Christ to the book of Revelation. The aim of the book is stated as an attempt to give the pupil a connected view of the events of the entire New Testament in the order of their occurrence, together with an outline of the Epistles as to time and occasion of writing, and an analysis of each. The pupil was expected to learn a considerable part of the text. It is further stated that the book endeavors to treat only those great doctrines which are agreed upon by all classes of evangelical Christians, omitting any discussion of extreme sectarian views. The calendar of

²⁶ Judd, Orange, *Lessons For Every Sunday in the Year*, vol. i, preface.

Sundays for seven years (page 5) makes possible an arrangement of lessons according to the church year. Following the calendar is the table of lessons in both series. The first-year lessons are printed in italics and the second in capitals.

We will consider a typical lesson entitled "The Testimony of Simeon."

The Scripture lesson is selected from Luke, Chapter II, verses 25-32. The time is given as B. C. 6 and the place as the temple in Jerusalem. The verses are followed by a section on antecedent history. This section gives the information that, since the close of the Old Testament by Malachi and Ezra, visions and prophecy had been sealed up for the remainder of that dispensation. Herod the Great was the king of Judea. The angel Gabriel appeared to a priest Zacharias while performing his duties in the temple. The angel promised a son who would be Christ's forerunner. Later the same angel appeared to Mary at Nazareth and announced to her the news that she would be the mother of the Messiah. John the Baptist and Jesus were born as predicted. The shepherds directed by the angels found the infant Saviour in Bethlehem. When Jesus was eight days old he was taken to the temple and, while he was there, the incident of this lesson occurred.²⁷

When the shepherds are referred to it is pointed out that the shepherds of Bethlehem were referred to in Series I, Lesson I. Following the antecedent history there is a note on the chronology of the Bible. It is stated that the old chronology was devised by Archbishop Ussher in 1654 but that investigations of later scholars have resulted in several corrections.

Then follow the questions on the lesson. Throughout the book, with the exception of the first lesson, a connected history of the lessons is given. In the first lesson the antecedent history takes the place of the connected history, and is really an introduction to the New Testament topics.

Other chapters deal with such topics as the slaughter of the innocents, the Baptist's preaching, the parables, the miracles of Jesus, and his teachings. In the Epistles the lessons deal with the chief events in the life of Paul, his preaching, his teaching, and the events connected with the last years of his life. The latter part of the book is given over to the Christian virtues and exercises such as purity, fidelity, prayer, patience, and closes with a lesson on Christian privileges and enjoyments.

The remaining books in a manner similar to that just illustrated treat the individual lessons. Number III concerns itself with the Old Testament, from Adam to Elijah. The preface explains that the Old Testament Volumes III and IV attempt to do for the Old Testament what the first two volumes have done for the New Testament.²⁸ Number IV extends from the time of Na-

²⁷ Judd, Orange, *Scripture Lessons for Every Sunday in the Year*, No. II, p. 8.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, Number III, preface.

both's vineyard to that of Christ. In some respects this series of lessons is similar to the *International Uniform Lessons* that were soon to follow. The Scripture text, in about as many verses as commonly used in the Uniform Lessons, was to be found at the beginning of each lesson. Judd's attempt to connect each lesson with the foregoing week's work also became characteristic of the Uniform Lessons of a decade later.

The difference in educational point of view and method between Judd's lessons and our best graded series is quite marked. Judd was of the opinion that the same books could be used for all ages—now a discarded theory of Sunday-school curriculum. These lessons reveal a lack of appreciation of the pupils' differing interests, needs, and capacities. Judd was not entirely unmindful of this problem, for in the preface to Number II he says: "The book is adapted to small children, and to Bible classes as well. The former may at first study mainly the questions directly or by reference to an appropriate passage of Scripture." There is an appreciation of age differences here but the idea is not carried far enough. The expressed aim of the book, in part, was to treat of those doctrines held by evangelical churches. The material was catechetically arranged, which has been discarded for the most part. There is little or no approach to the lessons except through the connected history, which is entirely informational and very brief. There is only a mechanical progression in the lesson—that of following the narrative—and there is no definite objective for each lesson, unless it be the mastering of so much material. Judd felt that the four volumes covered the chief events and topics of biblical history. Dr. James Strong says of the series: "Since the books are brief, the work is presented in a condensed and concise form. Even though the books are small they contain an outline of biblical history, and specimens more or less numerous, according to the import—of each portion of Holy Writ—are inserted from nearly every book of the Scriptures, with such explanation of the text and analysis of the content as to convey to the youthful mind a tolerably complete idea of the Bible as a whole and in detail."²⁹

²⁹ Judd, Orange, *Scripture Lessons for Every Sunday in the Year*, Number III, preface.

GRADING AND ADAPTATION OF MATERIALS

Although the period of graded lessons had not yet been reached, there were attempts at grading in this early period. The school was graded. Two departments were generally recognized—infant and senior. There was also an intermediate class, although it was not called an intermediate department. Not much more grading than that was attempted. When Newcomb wrote his *Scripture Questions* it was found that the first volume, on Romans, was too difficult for young children, and to meet their needs he wrote his *First Question Book*. It is very probable that earlier this book was not used with the "Infant classes."

At the very beginning of the period when the *Selected Lessons* had taken possession of the field and the boast of the American Sunday School Union was that at last there was a lesson for all pupils, attempts were made to care for the youngest classes. The Union published a *Primer* for beginners and this was followed by the *Child's Scripture Question Book*. Later the *Consecutive Questions*, dealing with the four Gospels, were used as an intermediate book. This is a clear attempt upon the part of the American Sunday School Union to provide for the different age groups. Although the books were made simpler in treatment, unfortunately the concepts for the most part remained unchanged.

Another attempt at adaptation of material was made by Daniel Wise, who published in 1845 the *Infant Teacher's Manual*, for the use of children, Sunday schools and families who were unable to read. The manual contained lessons about God, the Bible, the Sabbath, the creation of the world, the fall of Adam, and the histories of Abraham, Joseph, and Moses. The material was arranged in catechetical form, the teacher giving out the question and answer and requiring the child to commit them to memory. In the *Infant Teacher's Manual* the hymns were carefully selected in keeping with the lesson and were adapted to the capacity of the child. This book was usually followed by the *Child's Lesson Book on the New Testament* by Daniel Wise, which the author claimed should be the book next in order after the *Teacher's Manual*. It aimed to serve those children entering

the regular classes of the Sunday school. Examination of the contents shows that this volume contained subjects covering the entire Bible. Some of the chapters were: "The Miracles of Christ," "The Sermon on the Mount," "The Transfiguration," "The Crucifixion," "The Resurrection," "Lessons on the Epistles," and the "Revelation of St. John." There were both questions and answers.

James Floy also attempted gradation in his books, called *Lessons in Bible History*, a series of three. Number I states in the preface that it is one of a graduated Sunday-school textbook series. The material is taken from the New Testament and is intended for pupils eight to nine years of age. Number II, published in the same year (1861), consisted of lessons from the New Testament and was planned for pupils nine to ten years of age. Number III contained lessons on Bible morality and was designed for children over ten years of age.

The Massachusetts Sabbath School Society early recognized that all children could not profitably study the same lesson and in 1839 began the publication of the *Infant Series* to meet the demand for lessons for very small children. Also the Boston Sabbath School Society, in its report of 1828, said, "Religious instruction must be in the language which children comprehend."³⁰

From these facts the conclusion is justified that those leaders and writers did not remain insensible to the problem of grading, but attempted to solve it to the best of their ability. They recognized, for the most part, that all children could not study the same lesson. They saw very clearly that beginners must be provided with materials different from those for adults, that all ages should receive special attention. Yet, although materials were prepared for the various age groups, for the most part the actual grading was poorly done. This was due, in part, to the narrowness of the available material. The Bible constituted the basic source. It is extremely difficult to adapt biblical materials so as to make them satisfactory for all ages. The problem becomes still more perplexing when the material must

³⁰ *Second Annual Report, Boston Sabbath School Society, 1828.*

be prepared for catechetical use, which was the prevailing method of the period.

AIMS AND METHODS OF THE "BABEL" PERIOD

We shall now give attention to aims sought and methods used throughout the "Babel" period.

The aim of the "Babel" period. The fundamental aim of this period is identical with that of the first quarter century of the American Sunday school. The leaders were primarily concerned that the child should be converted and "get right with God" so as to secure an eternal salvation. The thought prevailed that the pupils must be prepared, through all of the teaching, for the day when he should experience a divine work of grace changing his life and should make a decision to become a Christian.

The Hon. Stephen C. Phillips states explicitly that the work of a Sunday-school teacher was to awaken the child to a spiritual life.³¹ Daniel Wise, another lesson writer, in 1845 said, "The church must have confidence in juvenile conversion."³² Mr. H. I. Smith, speaking before the Union Sabbath School Society of Gettysburg in 1839, said, "It is not enough to give information. Young souls must be made to inquire what they must do to be saved."³³ It is quite evident, therefore, that the Sunday school was regarded primarily as a soul-saving institution, whose chief business it was to lead the young to a "saved" condition. It is clear that Christian nurture was overshadowed by conversion and soul-saving; as expressed by F. D. Huntingdon: "At any rate and in all cases, conversion there must be."³⁴

Very closely connected with this aim, and in reality carrying it forward, was a second or supplementary aim. The child must be acquainted with the Word of God, for, whether it was indiscriminate memorization, selected lesson, or question book, all religious materials centered in the Bible.

³¹ Phillips, Stephen, see the *Eighteenth Annual Report of the Boston Sabbath School Society*, p. 11.

³² Wise, Daniel, *Infant Teacher's Manual*, p. 8.

³³ Smith, H. I., Discourse delivered before the Union Sabbath School Society of Gettysburg, 1839, p. 9.

³⁴ Huntingdon, F. D., An Address delivered before the State Convention of the Massachusetts Sabbath School Teachers, 1860.

Joseph Emerson, in the preface to his lesson material,³⁵ said, "To know the Bible is to know God and Christ, and without the Bible, God and Christ are never known." The teachers were exhorted to be sure that the children mastered the biblical facts since these were of such great importance. Enoch Mudge, believing that instruction constituted the most satisfactory means of giving a correct knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, said, "There are various modes of instruction and helps, all having the same object—to lead the student to a careful and diligent study of the Bible, that he may attain a knowledge of the important truths it contains."³⁶ He further says: "No employment can be so important to youth as the study of the living oracles of God . . . because they contain the kind of information which is best adapted to the state and condition of such a race of beings as we are."³⁷

Sylvester Graham, in 1831, expressed the ideal well: "Let the Bible be stereotyped upon the pages of the youthful heart . . . and it can never be destroyed by sacrilegious contempt, nor exchanged for means of sensuous indulgence, nor entirely laid aside and neglected."³⁸

F. A. Packard summarized the thought of the entire period in its relation to the Bible in the following lines: "They do not believe that any men or body of men since the days of the apostles have had any gifts or graces, which clothe their teaching or interpretations with any authority binding upon the conscience or judgment of others. The Bible is the only rule of faith and duty, and every man is required, on divine authority and at the peril of his own soul, to search the Scriptures and see what they testify of Christ and his doctrines. Hence to open the Bible to all the rising generations of our country is the grand and glorious object of the American Sunday School Union."³⁹ From these evidences we may conclude unequivocally that the outstanding

³⁵ Emerson, Joseph, *Lessons on the Old Testament*, preface.

³⁶ Mudge, Enoch, *A System of Bible Class Instruction*, preface.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Graham, Sylvester, *Sermon; Thy Kingdom Come*, 1831.

³⁹ Packard, Frederick Adolphus, *Popular Sketch of the Rise and Progress of Sunday Schools in the United States*, p. 10.

aim of the period was to lead the pupils to Christ, with the Bible as the agency best suited to perform that task.

The method employed. The method shows little change from that employed in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, although the materials differ. The memoriter method still predominated. Orange Judd considered it very desirable that as much biblical material as possible be committed to memory in early life.⁴⁰

James C. Jun speaks of childhood as the learning age and concludes that, since this is so, the teachers should use all diligence and care that the Bible should be instilled into the minds of youth.⁴¹ Joseph Emerson is very positive about the value of the memory method. He says, "The advantages of this mode are obvious to reason, confirmed by Scripture, and by the experiences of the ages."⁴² J. J. Janeway, of the Presbyterian Board of Publications, was greatly in favor of the memory method. He says, "The study of Scripture history and biography is certainly interesting and instructive to youth, for it stores their minds with many valuable facts."⁴³ The book from which this statement is taken is in the form of questions and answers—the usual catechetical book of the period. This author evidently thought of making the mind a storehouse rather than a thinking, problem-solving agency. The *Child's Lesson Book*, published in 1851, says in the preface that this book may be used as soon as the children in the Sunday school are old enough to memorize. In a book called the *Infant Teacher's Manual* it is stated that though the book contains a large number of questions for each lesson it is believed that the children may readily learn them within the hours.⁴⁴ These references and quotations make it obvious that the method utilized in this period was that of memorization.

There are a few protests against this method, as, for example, that of Newcomb, referred to earlier in this section. He believed

⁴⁰ Judd, Orange, *Lessons for Every Sunday in the Year*, Number I, preface.

⁴¹ Jun, James Covell, *Questions on the Historical Book of the New Testament*, preface.

⁴² Emerson, Joseph, *Lessons on the Old Testament*, preface.

⁴³ Janeway, J. J., *An Exposition of a portion of the Epistle to the Romans*, preface.

⁴⁴ Wise, Daniel, *Infant Teacher's Manual*, p. 9.

in memorization but felt that it was being greatly overdone, and that the pupils were not being given the opportunity to reflect upon thought-provoking questions. His lesson books were the outstanding protest against this prevalent system of memorizing.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The "Babel" period studied in this chapter covers a period of about thirty-five years. From 1815 to 1825 we found Sunday-school pupils memorizing large quantities of Scripture without plan or discrimination. This plan of biblical study, as we recall, later gave way to the more ordered scheme known as the *Selected Scripture Lessons* from the Bible, promoted most vigorously by the American Sunday School Union. When denominational consciousness became more pronounced, around 1835, an attempt was made by the denominations to furnish Sunday-school materials. The Sunday schools, however, enjoying local autonomy, secured their materials from different sources. Some used material prepared by the American Sunday School Union, others used their own denominational publications, and still others used materials prepared by private individuals.

The entire period appears to be one of great confusion. The growing denominational consciousness which came to expression following 1835, with its attendant competition, gave rise to a multitude of question books based on the Scriptures. This condition prevailed in America until the adoption of the *International Uniform Lessons* in 1872.⁴⁵ One might think at times that all was confusion and that no progress was being made. The competition of denominational boards, interdenominational unions, and private concerns did lead to turmoil; but it was a chaos out of which some semblance of order eventually came. If one should attempt to appraise these years in the light of present theory and practice, his criticisms for the most part would be unfavorable. The lessons were undoubtedly entirely too material-centered. The lesson material was cen-

⁴⁵ Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union*, p. 296.

tered in the Bible. It was thought that mere memorization of the Book would work some magical change in the life either presently or in the remoter future. The questions were wooden and mechanical and were formed with the purpose of making the pupil master content material. Very seldom were they of such a nature as to stimulate children to think out problems for themselves.

The lessons made very little attempt to stimulate the imagination and place before the pupils ideals that would motivate conduct. Great stories, biographies, or masterpieces of literature were not used. The lessons of the period with rare exceptions made no provision for conduct situations, the instruction was not related to life, nor was it applied to conduct. There was no program provided whereby the children could actually work out and develop religious habits.

In the lessons of these years God was not made attractive. Too much emphasis was placed upon his justice and watchfulness of a vengeful kind. The child would hardly be led to love, communicate with, or serve God. Being good was presented as a way of escape from what would surely happen to one who pursued the wrong course.

Another unfortunate feature of this period from a modern standpoint was the catechetical method. The books consisted of questions upon the text or upon a section of Scripture arranged in a fashion that was exceedingly uninteresting. Only occasionally was the material presented in narrative or story form. Too much emphasis throughout the period was placed upon fact information, events, historical episodes, and too little upon illustrations that might have worked over into the child's experience.

The most serious defect of the entire period was a neglect of the psychological approach. The child was not placed at the center. The words and concepts used were for the most part too difficult for children. The chronological order was used in nearly all instances. If the lessons were on the New Testament, they started at the first of the New Testament. If a particular book was studied, the chronological arrangement was used;

in other words, the objective was not found in the child's life, but in the amount of material covered. The individual lessons did not have definite aims. There was no real progress in the lessons except to cover so much material and master so much fact information.

The mechanical features for the most part were poor. The question books were unattractive. The print was small. The margins were not full and the paper was unattractive.

This chapter would not be complete without a word of appreciation of the work of such men as Messrs. Judd, Strong, and Wise. Strong and Wise were among the most eminent educators of their day, and Judd was a man of marked executive and practical ability. Their work cannot be judged by present-day standards but it must never be forgotten that their efforts helped to prepare the way for the *International Uniform Lessons* which were to follow.

We shall now give attention to the attempts which were destined to lead the way out of the "Babel" period of Sunday-school lesson materials.

REFERENCES

- Cope, Henry F., *The Evolution of the Sunday School*.
Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *Important and Remarkable Epochs in the History of Sunday Schools*.
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CHAPTER X

THE BEGINNING OF THE INTERNATIONAL
LESSONS

FOLLOWING 1872 the *International Uniform Lessons* for more than one third of a century constituted the major curriculum material of the Sunday-school world, reaching their zenith in 1910, when the other graded systems began to occupy a large place in the American Sunday schools. By the term "Uniform Lessons" is meant that type of lesson in which the same text was studied by all ages, children and adults, on a given Sunday.¹

The present chapter discusses the primary causes which led to uniformity in Sunday-school material.

DISSATISFACTION WITH THE FORMER MATERIALS

Prior to 1872 each denomination was attempting to furnish to its childhood and youth a system of lesson study which, practically without exception, was a study of the Bible. There was no uniformity or co-ordination between denominations, and many times very little within the denomination itself. Well has it been described as the "Babel" period in the Sunday-school world. As pointed out in Chapter IX,² the use of the question book was the prevailing method by which the Bible was studied. Following 1860 a growing dissatisfaction with this method of study appeared, accompanied by a desire on the part of Sunday-school leaders to overcome the confusion that everywhere existed in the religious curriculum. One might raise the question as to why the Sunday-school world should seemingly take a step backward from the graded question books of the forties

¹ In the following pages the term "Uniform Lesson" is often used instead of the longer but more exact title—*The International Sunday School Lessons*.

² See page 180.

and fifties. At this point we need to bear in mind, however, that the grading, such as it was, was exceedingly artificial, based more upon the nature of the material than upon the needs of the child. It was an attempt at simplification, for the most part, rather than an effort to place the child at the center and secure material suitable to his growing life. As a matter of fact, there was not much to give up. A plan that looked like escape from the chaos of the former conditions might be expected to receive more favorable consideration than the grading that had been accomplished up to that time.

CHANGING VIEWPOINT CONCERNING THE TASK OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

Then a change in point of view needs to be taken into account. During the third quarter of the nineteenth century the Sunday school began to develop a clearer conception of its task. It was beginning, at least, to realize that it was a teaching institution and not merely an assembly of children whose main task was to memorize a certain amount of Bible or catechism. The attempts of the public school to bring its lessons within reach of the child indirectly influenced the field of religious education. It is only natural, therefore, that there should be a reaction against the chaotic Sunday-school curriculum of the former quarter of a century or more, resulting in a desire for a closer unity in Sunday-school material. The changed point of view overthrew the catechetical method of biblical study, but the final step to a graded curriculum with the child at the center was a long distance in the future.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL INSTITUTE MOVEMENT

Notable among the causes and influences leading to the introduction of the *International Sunday School Lessons* was the Sunday-school Institute movement. The institute, or normal class for Sunday-school teachers, was most likely copied from the field of public education, where the plan had been successfully utilized by Horace Mann and Henry Barnard. During the years 1837 to 1848 Horace Mann succeeded in establishing a

system of normal schools in the State of Massachusetts for the purpose of improving the teachers and their methods. Henry Barnard, as principal of the State Normal School of Connecticut, did much to improve the teacher's methods in that State. The movement for trained teachers in the field of public education was to have an influence also in the Sunday-school field.

Sunday-School normal classes. The first Sunday-school normal class was organized in Joliet, Illinois, in 1857, by the Rev. John H. Vincent.³ Three years later the Sunday-school committee of the Rock River Conference called attention to the neglect in the training of Sunday-school teachers, and expressed the desire that something might be done in that direction. On April 16, 1861, the Galena District Conference met in Freeport, Illinois, and, in connection with its other work, conducted a teachers' institute.⁴ Pleased with the success of the new venture, this District Conference inaugurated the Galena District Institute as one of its permanent organizations, with the Rev. John H. Vincent as the first president. He conducted during the year 1861 several subdistrict institutes with good results. As a result of his influence upon the Cook County Sunday-school Teachers' Convention in 1864 a teacher's institute was held in Chicago during the winter of 1864-1865.⁵ A similar movement was inaugurated in New York by Ralph Wells and R. G. Pardee⁶ in 1864.

Influence upon the development of Uniform Lessons. In these institutes teachers not only received help in the art of lesson planning and presentation but also had an opportunity to voice their sentiments in favor of a more systematic plan of Bible study. Dr. Edwin Wilbur Rice summarizes the influence of the teachers' institutes in the following statement: "A uniform topic of study in the same school was warmly advocated in Sunday-school teachers' institutes held from 1862 to 1869. The

³ Sampey, John Richard, *The International Lesson System*, p. 53. Fleming H. Revell Company, publishers.

⁴ Gilbert, Simeon, *The Lesson System*, pp. 20-21.

⁵ Sampey, John Richard, *The International Lesson System*, p. 54.

⁶ For a sketch of his life and work, see Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union*, p. 184.

agitation of this idea among teachers at institutes and conventions created a state of ferment out of which some remarkable changes were expected to emerge. The institute was the chief agency for crystallizing the new uniform idea."⁷ Mr. Simeon Gilbert goes so far as to say that the system of *International Lessons* would never have been practicable, even if it might have been at some time experimented with, had it not been preceded by this Sunday-school Institute Movement.⁸

INFLUENCE OF SUNDAY SCHOOL LEADERS

Henry F. Cope says, "After the Civil War there were Sunday-school giants abroad in the land."⁹ B. F. Jacobs and John H. Vincent are names of outstanding significance in the history of the Sunday school. Both espoused the idea of a uniform lesson for all ages, and particularly, Mr. Jacobs, a layman of Chicago, bent the energy of a powerful personality to the end that such a system might become nation-wide. Vincent was the lesson planner while Jacobs was the promoter and organizer.¹⁰

In 1865, Mr. Vincent, as secretary of the Chicago Teachers' Union, began the publication of the *Sunday School Teacher's Quarterly*. In 1866 in the *Teacher's Quarterly*, then a monthly magazine, Mr. Vincent began to publish a course of uniform lessons on the life of Jesus. These lessons were issued for the Sunday schools of Chicago and were entitled "A Two Years' Course with Jesus." Mr. Vincent in 1866 severed his connection with the Chicago Teachers' Union but continued throughout that year to write the lessons for the *Sunday School Teacher*.

This great Sunday-school leader, in the preface of his series of lessons, *Two Years with Jesus*, and in the National Convention of 1872, took a bold stand for one lesson for all ages.¹¹

In 1867, the Rev. Edward Eggleston became editor of the *Sunday School Teacher* and carried out Mr. Vincent's second-

⁷ Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union*, p. 297.

⁸ Gilbert, Simeon, *The Lesson System*, p. 22.

⁹ Cope, Henry F., *The Evolution of the Sunday School*, p. 104. Reprinted by permission of the Pilgrim Press.

¹⁰ For sketches of their life and work, see Sampey, John Richard, *The International Lesson System*, pp. 48-53, 56-60.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

year plan of lessons by publishing the lessons for that year upon the "Teachings of Jesus." When Mr. Vincent resigned from his office in the Chicago Teachers' Union he became secretary of the Methodist Sunday School Union and continued to issue lessons which are known as the *Berean Series*. The lessons chosen and published by Mr. Eggleston for the Sunday schools of Chicago and other churches which cared to use them are known as the *National Series*, since under his administration the *Sunday School Teacher* became the *National Sunday School Teacher*.

Mr. Eggleston in 1869 expressed himself as being in favor of the use of one lesson for the entire school with such adaptations by the teachers as to make it serviceable for all ages and capacities.¹² He believed that a uniform lesson was necessary for an effective school, since such a plan would make possible the holding of general exercises, give unity to the hymns and prayers, and bring about a oneness of purpose on the part of those studying the same Bible passage.¹³

By the year 1871 he appears to have changed somewhat in his thinking, for at the National Sunday-school Convention in that year he did not favor a uniform lesson for all ages.¹⁴ However, through the *National Series*, which he published, he had added his influence to the movement for uniformity, which was so ardently championed by Vincent and Jacobs. When we are noting the factors responsible for the *International Lessons* we must not fail to take into account the influence of these giants in the Sunday-school field.

Without question, the most important immediate forerunners of the *International Sunday School Lessons* were the lessons prepared and circulated by Vincent and Eggleston.¹⁵ The *Selected Scripture Lessons* of 1827, and the years immediately following, promoted by the American Sunday School Union, were not unlike the Uniform Lessons inaugurated in 1872. However, the system

¹² Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union*, p. 297.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 297.

¹⁴ *Official Report of the Eleventh International Sunday-School Convention*, 1905, p. 43.

¹⁵ Randolph, Warren, *Report of the World's Sunday School Convention*, 1889, p. 116.

sponsored by the American Sunday School Union did not become the impetus for uniformity in 1872. The impetus for the Uniform System came from the lessons by Vincent and Eggleston, for as a result of these lessons B. F. Jacobs conceived the idea of uniformity for all the Sunday schools of America.¹⁶ Because of their importance we need to examine the characteristic materials which these lessons contained.

VINCENT'S LESSONS

Mr. Vincent, as editor of the *Sunday School Teacher*, announced in 1866 a course of uniform lessons, entitled *Two Years With Jesus*, that was heralded as "a new system of Sunday-school study."¹⁷ The first year of the course consisted of the life, journeys, and miracles of Jesus, and the second year dealt with the parables, conversations, and discourses of the Master. During the first year of the course (1866) Mr. Vincent resigned as editor of the *Sunday School Teacher* but continued throughout that year to write the lessons which he had announced. The following year (1867) Mr. Edward Eggleston became editor of this monthly magazine and published the lessons on the second year of the course announced, completing the course announced by the *Sunday School Teacher*. When Mr. Vincent moved to New York, in 1866, to become secretary of the Methodist Sunday School Union, he resumed his plan of uniform lessons. It is our purpose to examine the specific units of Vincent's lessons because of their significance in this movement for a uniform circulation.

Two Years With Jesus. As the title indicates, the lessons were concerned with the life of Jesus, covering two years of study, twenty-four lessons to the year, each lesson to be studied for two Sundays. In the preface Mr. Vincent takes a bold stand for Uniform Lessons: "We deem it desirable to engage the entire Sunday school in the study of the same lesson each Sabbath." He believed that such a system would insure concentration, repetition, definiteness, depth of impression, and thoroughness.

¹⁶ Randolph, Warren, *Report of the World's Sunday School Convention*, 1889, p. 116.

¹⁷ *National Sunday School Teacher*, January, 1866.

It was his belief that the Uniform Lessons would give a central thought to the entire exercise of the school.¹⁸ According to this idea, the lesson text should be read at the opening of the session, and should inspire the prayer, determine the selection of the hymns, and facilitate the general review at the close.

Vincent, however, did not believe in uniformity of lesson text without adaptation of the material. He further says in the preface that the benefits of the Sunday school cannot be secured unless the lessons are adapted to the varied capacities of the pupils. "The demands of the infant, the youth, and the adult cannot be met by one method." Therefore, Mr. Vincent suggested a grading system for the Sunday school and accordingly planned his courses as follows:

"Infant grade," ages 3-6, children not yet reading.

"Second grade," ages 6-10, children reading easy texts.

"Third grade," ages 10-16.

"Senior grade," consisting of larger pupils, adults, officers, and teachers.

Two Years With Jesus was divided into six sections consisting of three for the first year and three for the second. The first year, entitled "Christ the Wonder-Worker," contained an historical outline of his life, journeys, and miracles. The second year, entitled "Christ the Great Teacher," made a study of his parables, conversations, and discourses. The lessons from the unit "Christ the Great Teacher" are in plan and execution so much like those of the first year that it is not necessary to cite illustrative materials from the unit.

Another form provided a leaflet for the younger children. One side of the leaflet consisted of pictures or lessons in bold type for the "infants," the opposite side containing a picture and a reading lesson for the second grade.¹⁹ This means, then, that through the adaptation worked out by Vincent scholars of all grades were provided for. *

The *Sunday School Teacher* of 1866 describes the plan in the following manner:

¹⁸ Vincent, John H., *Two Years With Jesus*, preface.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

I. THE SYSTEM

1. It comprises only 24 lessons for the year, two Sabbaths being given to a lesson.
2. The fifth Sabbath of the five Sabbath months is left open for review, concert of prayer, missionary exercises, etc.
3. Each lesson is accompanied by a Golden Text or a selection of Scripture for memorizing.

II. THE PLAN OF ANALYSIS

Or Universal Question Guide, Adapted to All Bible Lessons

P. P. P. P. D. D. D. D.

Here are four P's and four D's by the aid of which teachers and scholars may prepare every lesson.

1. P. P. (Parallel Passages)
2. P. Persons (Biographical)
3. P. Places (Topographical)

-
4. D. Dates (Chronological)
 5. D. Doings (Historical)
 6. D. Doctrines (Theological)
 7. D. Duties (Practical)²⁰

(1) "*Christ the Wonder-Worker.*" An examination of one or two lessons will serve to illustrate the value and method of the course. In each instance the lesson for the third grade, ages 10-16, will be compared with the corresponding lesson for Seniors, aged 17 and above. If we follow this procedure for both years with the two age groups, along with some other materials that will be presented, we shall have a good illustration of the course, *Two Years With Jesus*. The following is a complete copy of the lesson in almost exactly the same form as it first had:

LESSON XXXII. THIRD GRADE, YEAR ONE

Blind Bartimeus

I. Scripture

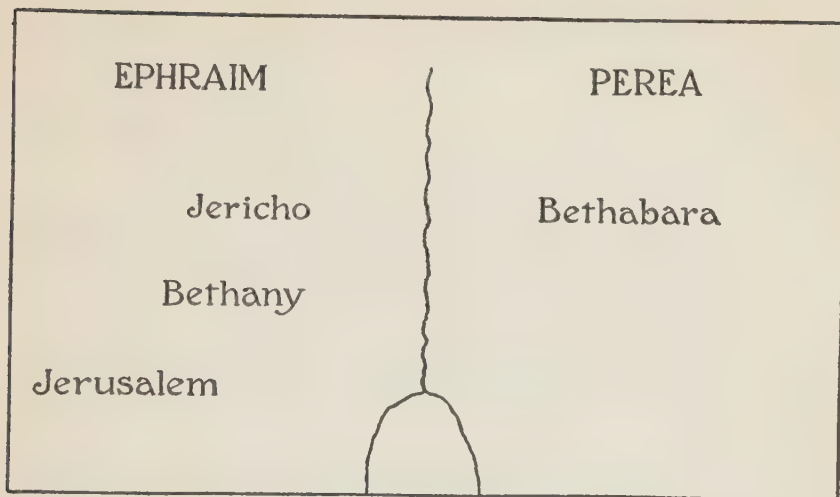
Lesson: Mark X, 46; Luke XVIII, 36, 37; Mark X, 47-52; Luke XVIII, 43; Home readings and lesson hymn, page 75. Golden Text: Eccles. XII, 1, 2.

II. Plan of Study.

The daily plan of analysis known as the P., P.P., P., D., D., D., D., is here fully illustrated.

²⁰ *Sunday School Teacher*, pp. 13-14, 1866.

I. Places



Map of Christ's last Journey Beyond the Jordan. John XI, 54; Matt. XIX, I; Luke XIII, 22.

1. Jericho. Mark X, 46. 2. Out of Jericho. Verse 46. 3. Highway-side. Verse 46. Nazareth. Verse 47.

2. Parallel Passages.

Matt. XX, 39-44; Mark X, 46-52; Luke XVIII, 35-43.

3. Persons.

(1) Jesus, Mark X, 46 called also Jesus of Nazareth, Verse 47; Son of David, Verse 47; (2) Disciples, Verse 46; (3) People, Verse 46; (4) Bartimeus, Verse 46, (5) Tinicus, Verse 46.

4. Dates of Chronology.

(Friday) March (11?) A. D. 29.

5. Details or Doings.

(1) Jesus and disciples at Jericho, (2) The crowds throng him, (3) "What does this mean?" (4) "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by," (5) The cry for help, (6) The people reprove him, (7) The call renewed, (8) called to Christ and cured.

6. Doctrines.

(1) Poverty is sometimes a blessing. It brought Bartimeus within reach of Jesus. (2) A small portion of Gospel truth may give salvation to the soul that believes it. "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by." (3) People may be followers of Christ, and yet discourage those who seek his salvation. "Many charged him that he should hold his peace." (4) The grace and power of Christ.

7. Duties.

(1) Knowing that Jesus is near, we should promptly seek him. (2) Never yield to discouragement or opposition. Bartimeus "cried the more a great deal." (3) Have perfect faith in the power of Christ.

III. Topics.

1. The crowded highway.
2. The beggar's cry.
3. The command of Christ.
4. The conversation and cure.

IV. Questions.

1. First topic. What is a highway? Where was this one? Why was it crowded?

Name the different persons and classes of persons in the crowd.

2. Second topic. Name the beggar. What was his father's name? What ailed the man? What were the first words he spoke? What answer was given him? What did he know of Jesus? What did he cry?

3. Third topic. Did the crowd encourage Bartimeus at first to go to Jesus? What did they say? Did Jesus hear the man? What did they then say?

4. Fourth topic. Give the conversation between Christ and Bartimeus. What followed? What were the results of the cure?

Look at our list of Doctrines and Duties and tell where each one is taught in the lesson.²¹

In order that we may have an idea of an adaptation to another age group, the same lesson for the Senior ages will next be noted.

LESSON XXXII

Blind Bartimeus

I. Golden Text: Eccles. XII, 1, 2, II. Home readings: Monday, Psa. LI, 1-10, Tuesday, Psa. LI, 11-19, Wednesday, 1 John II, 8-11. Thursday, Rev. III, 14-22, Friday, Matt. XX, 29-34, Saturday, Mark X, 46-52. Sabbath, Luke XVIII, 35-43.

III. Lesson Hymn.

O, God to whom in flesh revealed,
The helpless all for succor came,
The sick to be relieved and healed,
And found salvation in thy name.

Thou seest me helpless and distressed,
Feeble and faint, and blind, and poor:
Weary, I come to thee for rest.
And sick of sin implore a cure.

IV. The Lesson.

1. Examine the parallel passages: Matt. XX, 29-34; Mark X, 46-52; Luke XVIII, 35-43.

2. As each of the following topics is named let the three evangelists be consulted, to see how they record the facts.

1. Jesus and his disciples at Jericho.
2. The thronging multitude.

²¹ Vincent, John H., *Two Years With Jesus*, Lesson XXXII.

3. The blind man's question.

4. The reply.

5. The cry for help.

6. The people's reproof.

7. The cry renewed.

8. Called and cured.

3. What does the incident teach us?

4. What does the Golden Text teach us?

5. Let a scholar give some description of Jericho.

V. Condensed Notes.

Time: March 11 (?) A. D. 28 (?)

Two Blind Men. "As to the difference in the number healed, it is certain there were two, for Matthew expressly says so; though because of some incidental circumstance (as that one was much better known than the other) Mark and Luke name but one. In like manner, in the account of the Gadarene demoniac, which circumstance is mentioned by these same historians, and by them only, Matthew informs his readers that there were two men dispossessed (Matt. VIII, 28-34), though Mark and Luke name but one." —Longking. *Bartimeus*, son of Timeus, Bar means son of (Barnibus, son of consolation; Barjona, etc.).

Lessons: 1. Seek Christ promptly and with faith, as Bartimeus did. 2. Do not yield to discouragements. When the people tried to silence Bartimeus' call "he cried the more a great deal." 3. Give glory to God for his work of restoration when wrought upon thee.²²

A comparison of the two lessons for the different age groups on the same lesson text reveals certain differences: For the third-grade pupils (10-16) the Scripture texts are given at the beginning of the lesson, while for the senior pupils they are not. In the first lesson the home readings are not inserted in the lesson page, while in the second they are listed. In the first lesson no hymn is given on the lesson page, while in the lesson for seniors a hymn is printed with the lesson. In the first lesson the plan of "analysis, parallel-places, passages, and persons, and parallel dates, doings, doctrines, and duties" is used, while in the plan for the senior group this treatment is not used. In the lesson for the third grade four topics are listed for study, while in the lesson for seniors eight topics are listed and the senior pupils are asked to consult the first three Gospels to see how they record the facts. The questions accompanying the first lesson are more numerous and of a simpler nature than those for the senior pupils. The senior pupils are expected to exercise more independence in

²² Vincent, John H., *Two Years With Jesus*, Senior Grade.

study than the younger ones in that they are called upon to examine the Gospels for their record of the facts. The seniors also have a greater number of "lessons" listed for their consideration. The second lesson is more exegetical and historical in its treatment; that is, questions on the Bible record are raised and explanations offered.

The closing lessons of the first-year course are worthy of notice not only because of their interest, but because they differ from the other lessons of the book in certain respects.

We note "Lesson XLIX. Interesting Incidents Omitted." Since in the preceding lessons it was found to be impossible to treat fully all of the important events in the life of Christ, there was a suggestion to the pupils that the omitted facts which are referred to in this lesson might be studied at home or be taken up in special week-end classes. Some of the omitted topics which are treated in this lesson are : (1) "The Annunciation to Mary," (2) "Joseph's Visit by an Angel," (3) "Circumstances of Jesus' Birth," (4) "Flight into Egypt," (5) "John's Testimony to Jesus," and (6) "The Triumphant Entrance into Jerusalem."

In the plan of study for this lesson it was suggested that the pupils should read over the list at home with the help of the Scriptures. The pupil is asked to record the number of miracles enumerated and point out the fact which gives most encouragement to the penitent sinner, and that which is most interesting and important to children. Both pupil and teacher are requested to write a few "practical lessons" to be presented to the superintendent.

Next, "Lesson L. The Names Given to Jesus." One of the final lessons was devoted to a review of the names applied to Jesus. In Section I are the names given to Jesus which have been used in the course of the lessons for the year.²³ Some of

²³ This is the complete list of names applied to Jesus in the lessons for the year.

Jesus, Luke III, 21ff.

Holy Thing, Luke I, 35.

Son, John III, 36.

Son of God, Mark I, 1.

Son of living God, Matt. XVI, 16.

Son of the Blessed, Mark XIV, 61.

Son of the Most High God, Mark V, 7.

Only Begotten Son, John I, 18.

Son of Man, Matt. XVII, 22; IX, 6.

Lord, Luke V, 8.

Emmanuel, Matt. I, 23.

Saviour, Luke II, 11.

Christ, John VII, 26.

Jesus Christ, John I, 17.

Christ the Lord, Luke II, 11.

The Lord's Christ, Luke II, 26.

(Continued on next page.)

these are: "Son of Man," "Emmanuel," "Good Shepherd," "This just person," and "Holy One of God."

Section II contains other names given to Jesus in the Scriptures, and of the thirty-five quoted in the lesson the following are typical: "Advocate," "Almighty," "Anointed," "Branch," and "Messenger of the Covenant."

In the plan of this lesson it is suggested to the pupil that he examine the passage referred to under each title and ask himself what practical lessons and encouragements may be drawn from the titles given to Jesus.²⁴

"Lesson LII. Interesting Facts About Jesus." In this lesson the interesting "facts" are: (1) "Houses He entered," (2) "Christ's Visit to Jerusalem," and (3) "His places of prayer." The pupils are encouraged to examine the Scripture passages concerning these topics and draw lesson therefrom.

"Lesson LIII. Testimonies to the Character of Jesus." In this lesson, twenty outstanding testimonies from the Scriptures attributed to Jesus are simply listed. In order that we may have an idea of what they were like, five of them will be noted.

1. Thy Holy Child Jesus, Acts IV, 27.
2. The Holy and the Just. Acts, III, 14.
3. A lamb without blemish and without spot. I Peter I, 19.
4. Thou art fairer than the children of men, Psa. XIV, 2.
5. Who did no sin neither was guilt found in his mouth, I Peter II, 22.

It is suggested that the entire list of twenty be read by the class with comments or questions by the teacher.

(2) *A novel feature.* A novel feature found at the end of Volume I is a list of monthly lessons which were designed for recitation at the close of the regular lessons on the last Sabbath of each month and at concerts or other public entertainments.²⁵

Light, John I, 9.
 Light of the world, John VIII, 12.
 A light to lighten the Gentiles, Luke II, 32.
 Carpenter, Mark VI, 3.
 Carpenter's Son. Matt. XIII, 55.
 Good Shepherd, John X, 1.
 Way, John XIV, 6.
 Truth, John XIV, 6.
 Life, John XIV, 6.
 This just person, Matt. XXVII, 29.
 He whom God hath sent, John III, 34.

He that cometh in the name of the Lord, Mark XI, 9.
 Prophet of Nazareth, Matt. XXI, 11.
 Glory of thy people Israel, Luke II, 32.
 King of the Jews, Matt. II, 2; John XVIII, 39.
 King of Israel, John I, 49; XII, 13.
 Word, John I, 14.
 Lamb of God, John I, 29, 36.
 Bread of Life, John VI, 48.
 Door, John X, 7.
 Holy one of God, Mark I, 24.

²⁴ Vincent, John H., *Two Years With Jesus*, vol. i, p. 54.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 59-63.

The first lesson is entitled "On the State of the World at the Coming of Christ." There are six questions on this subject, of which the following is a sample: "Who was the Roman Emperor at that time? Augustus Cæsar, nephew of Julius Cæsar."

The second is "The Land of Promise." This lesson contained nine questions and answers, of which the following is typical: "Give the principal names of Palestine. Holy Land, Canaan, Promised Land, Palestine, Land of Israel, and Land of Judea." Following the questions the pupils were supposed to sing three verses of a song (air—"Auld Lang Syne!"). The first verse is typical of all—

"The Tribes of Israel now enrolled,
As God division made.
When he their hosts from Egypt called,
And to the Jordan led."

The third lesson is a review of the first quarter. Eight questions are given covering the lessons of this quarter. Two typical questions are quoted here. "About what holy person have we studied during the past quarter?" "How many of his names can you recall?"

The fourth lesson is entitled "Jerusalem." Nine questions and a song "The Hills of Jerusalem," constitute this monthly lesson. Three sample questions are given: (1) "Where is Jerusalem? In Palestine, and in the province of Judea;" (2) "What high mountain is east of Jerusalem?" and (3) "What deep valley between?"

The fifth monthly lesson is a study of "The Temple." The questions here deal with the location of the Temple, its buildings, its destruction, the building of the second Temple, and its enlargement.

Lesson VI is a review of the second quarter. Nine questions and twelve help-words, such as "Caiaphas," "cross bearers," and "angels," recall the minor as well as the significant things of the second quarter's lessons.

Lesson VII is entitled "Cities and Towns." The pupils are asked to spell a dozen or so names among which are Bethsaida, Capernaum, Chorazin, Nazareth, and Cæsarea. In addition

to spelling the names the pupils are expected to tell the direction and distance of each place from Jerusalem.

The eighth lesson is a study of "Principal Persons" and as the superintendent pronounces such names as Barabbas, Beelzebub, Jairus, Nicodemus, and Nathaniel; a scholar or a whole class mentions an incident with which the names may be connected.

Number nine is a review of the third quarter. Five questions and certain catch words such as "mountains," "miracles," "blind," "born blind," and "The nine" are used to recall the work of the third quarter.

The tenth lesson is a study of "Jewish Days," and there is a description of the ordinary Jewish day, the civil day, the watches of the night, the week, and the sacred days.

Number eleven is "An Exercise of Scripture Words." A quotation will make the plan of the lesson clear: "As each word is called out, let a scholar be requested to explain or define it, and to tell in connection with what New Testament incident it occurs. Four or five words may be given to a class for the above purpose." Out of the forty-four words, ten have been selected as fair samples of all:

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------|
| 1. "baskets" | 6. "inn" |
| 2. "cross" | 7. "manger" |
| 3. "done" \ | 8. "pinnacle" |
| 4. "fisher" \ | 9. "superscription" |
| 5. "grave" | 10. "watch" |

The final lesson is a review of the year's work. In order to facilitate the review, the lessons for the year are divided into five groups as follows: (1) Ten lessons between Bethlehem and Gethsemane; (2) eleven lessons between Gethsemane and the Ascension; (3) four geographical lessons; (4) ten introductory lessons on miracles; and (5) twenty-one additional lessons on miracles. Then follow eight questions which may be summed up in three: (1) Name these lessons according to their classes; (2) How many of the miracles were performed on the blind? In behalf of the hungry? On deaf and dumb? On the sea? On demoniacs? On the dead? and (3) If Christ was so merciful and mighty, what is our duty toward him?

Following the monthly lessons in Volume I is found a section containing the Golden Texts, Home Readings, and Lesson Hymns for each of the lessons in the *First Year with Jesus*.

(3) *The Appendix*. The Appendix for the *First Year with Jesus* treated five separate subjects.

Section A. This section contained a description of the geography of Palestine.

Section B. Here an attempt is made to explain a miracle as follows: "Miracles are work which no man can do, except God be with him." John 3.2. They are not to be confused with performances of sleight of hand, which are human, for no human being can work a real miracle. "Miracles are the product of direct divine action for a given purpose."

Section C. This part deals with the miracle of the water and the wine. The place is located nine miles north of Nazareth: the water pots are described as tall stone jars, and the wine is regarded as pure native wine containing no poisons.

Section D. This is a description of the sea of Galilee and the adjoining plains.

Section E. This describes the Temple, gives attention to the courts of the Temple, the pool of Bethesda, and the Prætorium.

(4) *Evaluation of the Two-year course*. The evaluation offered on the lessons—*Two Years With Jesus* are grouped under two heads: (a) Positive Values and (b) Defects.

(a) *Positive Values*. First, in Volume II, provision is made for expressional work, requiring the pupils to prepare written answers to a set of questions in the lesson designed for that purpose. For example, in Lesson VII for Third Grade, there is this question: "How is the word of God like a seed?"

Second, the device known as the "completion sentence," used in some of the lessons, is valuable in that the pupil is asked to fill in the sentences, and is so required at least to memorize the Scripture text. For example, in Lesson VII of Volume II, the question is asked: "What happened to the seed? Some was . . . Why? The rest was . . . Why?"

Third, the appendix to Volume I contains some very interesting material about the Bible. The description of the geography

of Palestine, of the Temple, and other explanation offered, makes the appendix valuable as an abbreviated commentary on the Scriptures.

(b) *Defects.* First, the treatment is almost entirely expository and exegetical, the major part of the lesson being taken up with explanations.

Second, the approach to the lessons is logical rather than psychological. The system of parallel passages, places, persons, and dates, doings, doctrines, and duties makes a convenient outline for the teacher but it ignores the natural or psychological treatment of the lesson. There is no suggestion that the problems of the child might alter the lesson treatment.

Third, the lessons are material-centered rather than child-centered. The lesson treatment makes it very evident that the main objective is to explain the material rather than to solve the individual or personal problems of the child. The biblical materials, in other words, are not treated as illustrative but, rather, as the central point of interest. For example, in Lesson I the several names given to Jesus in the Scripture are of little value to the pupils ten to sixteen years of age. The same may be said of the attempt to draw practical lessons and encouragement from the names of Jesus. Lesson LII of Volume I is entitled "Testimonies to the Character of Jesus from the Scriptures," and one example cited is, "Thou art fairer than the children of men." Psa. XLV. 2. Pupils ten to twelve are interested in heroic stories, pupils thirteen and fourteen are interested in biographical narrative, and those who have reached the age of fifteen or sixteen would be interested in a life of Christ presented as a strong, courageous, magnanimous character around which they might integrate their lives, but a cataloguing of the names of Jesus reflects an emphasis on biblical information for its own sake.

Fourth, the point of view assumed in the lessons is more suited for adults than for children. For example, in Volume I, Lesson XLIX, the pupil is asked to enumerate the miracles of Jesus and point out the facts which give most encouragement to the penitent sinner. This procedure might be legitimate for

adults, and especially for those who had found their way into the religious life through the avenue of repentance, but such an exercise for pupils is for the most part outside the range of their experience.

Fifth, the grading of the school is very unfortunate in that children of ten were placed with youth of sixteen. The range of interests and experiences is too great for the same lessons to be effective for these respective ages.

A Year With Moses.²⁶ After finishing the series of lessons which we have just examined, Mr. Vincent outlined and published another called *New Serial Sunday School Text-Book* under the general title, *A Year With Moses*.

The book of lessons is arranged so as to be adapted to all ages on the basis of the same Scripture text for all. There were fifty-two lessons in the course with no provision for review at any point nor at the close of the series. The course of lessons covered the main incidents in the history of the children of Israel in Egypt, the birth and finding of Moses, his training and flight, his call to service, the plagues in Egypt, the escape from Egypt into the desert, the long period of wandering, and the death of Moses.

The book is divided into two parts or sections: Number I, for "Infants" and "Primary pupils," and Number II, for the "Third Grade" and "Seniors." As in the case of the series *Two Years With Jesus*, the lessons are all built upon substantially the same plan. Since this is the case, one lesson will be chosen from Section I and the same lesson with the adaptations from Section II, in order to present the characteristics of the entire course. The lessons chosen for examination are typical of all.

"Lesson III. Section I."²⁷ For "Infants" and "Primary pupils." *Strife and Flight*. In this section two pages are given to each lesson, the one on the left for the infants and the one on the right for the primary pupils.

²⁶ Vincent, John H., *A Year With Moses*, 1870.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, Section I, p. 10.

Left-hand page—

LESSON III

Strife and Flight

Picture of the Egyptian
killing the Israelite and
the intervention of Moses.

1. Explain this picture by Exodus II, 11-15.
2. Show how Moses gave up honor, wealth, power, luxury for affliction, toil, and poverty.
3. Reprove selfishness in little people, and urge them by the examples of Moses and of Jesus to deny themselves.

Right-hand page—

LESSON III

Strife and Flight

(Before Christ 1531)

I. Golden Text.

Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Heb. XI, 25.

II. Lesson.

Exodus II, 11-15 [The verses are printed in full].

III. Lesson Hymn.

"Is there a thing than life more dear?
A thing from which we cannot part?
We can; we now rejoice to tare
The idol from our bleeding heart.

"Jesus accept our sacrifice,
All things for thee we count but loss;
Lo! at thy word our idol dies—
Dies on the altar of thy cross.

"For what to thee, O Lord we give,
A hundred fold we here obtain;
And soon with thee shall all receive,
And loss shall be eternal gain."

Number II contained, as we have indicated, the same lesson texts with adaptations to third grade and seniors. For purposes of comparison the same lesson text which was used for infants and primary children, with its adaptations designed for the older groups, will now be examined—"A year with Moses, Third Grade and Senior."

LESSON III

Strife and Flight

I. Golden Text, Heb. XI, 25 [It is the same as for the children and is printed in full].

II. Home Readings.

Monday, Heb. XI, 23-27. Tuesday, Acts VII, 22-29. Wednesday, Isa. LVIII, 1-12. Thursday, Luke IV, 16-32. Friday, Dan. III, 9-30. Saturday, Acts XX, 17-27. Sabbath, Exodus II, 11-15.

III. The Lesson, Exodus II, 11-15 [The verses are printed in full].

IV. Topical Outline.

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. The Smiter. | 3. The Striving Hebrews. |
| 2. The Smiter's Slain. | 4. The Flight for Life. |

V. Questions.

[In this section there were nineteen questions of which five of the typical ones will be noted.]

1. Why did Moses go out unto his brethren?
2. What conversation is recorded in verses 13 and 14?
3. Was Moses the gainer or the loser for giving up his royal privileges?
4. What sacrifices did he make? (Think.)
5. What qualities of character appear in Moses' conduct at this time?

VI. Lesson Hymn.

(It is just the same as the one for the younger children.)

VII. Notes.

The notes describe the education of Moses and the location of the land of Midian.

A comparison of the two lessons, or, rather, of the same lesson for the two groups above the "Infant" and "Primary" grade, reveal at least the following points: First, the titles, Golden Texts, the Scripture texts, the hymns are the same for both groups. Second, topical outlines and explanatory notes are not presented in the lessons for younger children. Third, the questions are much more numerous for the older ages and in most instances are more thought-provoking than for the younger pupils. Fourth, pictures are commonly used in the lessons for the younger children but not in those for older ones. Fifth, on the whole, the mechanical features in both courses are unsatisfactory, and crowded, the print small, and the lines poorly spaced. Sixth, the lessons are material-centered and not pupil-centered; and the chronological approach is employed rather than the psychological.

An examination of the sample lessons discussed here together

with the other lessons of the book yields certain considerations that may be summarized under the following heads:

1. The lessons provide a good example of biblical exposition. Explanations and information are presented.

2. The printing of the daily home readings was valuable in that it furnished a form of supervised Bible reading through the week, and called attention to the passages which were related to Sunday-school lessons. This does not mean that the daily readings suggested here furnish the best plan of home Bible reading, only that the plan suggested in the lessons is superior to the desultory method of Bible reading in that it was at least related to a central theme.

3. There is no provision for review since there are fifty-two lessons for the year. This, it would seem, is unfortunate, as a well-planned review has genuine value.

4. The pupils ten years of age have exactly the same lesson treatment as the adults. Since there is such a wide difference between the interests and experiences of children and adults, it appears that we have a backward step here from the procedure of the former book, *Two Years With Jesus*, in which some attempt was made to grade the lesson materials.

5. Much in this book of lessons is beyond the comprehension of the pupils. To be convinced of the truth of this statement one needs only to refer to the Golden Text and the hymn for the primary children on page 219 of this study, for one example. This is typical of many others which might be noted.

The lessons prepared and published by Mr. Vincent were widely used in Chicago, New York, and other cities and towns.²⁸ Although Mr. Vincent was a Methodist, his series of lessons were used not only by the Methodist Church but by other denominations as well.²⁹ For this reason they must be regarded as one of the distinctive forerunners of the Uniform Lessons of 1872 and after.

²⁸ Report of the World's Sunday School Convention, 1889, p. 116.

²⁹ Sampey, John R., *The International Lesson System*, p. 61.

THE EGGLESTON LESSONS

The Rev. Edward Eggleston assumed editorship of the *Sunday School Teacher* in 1867, changing the name to the *National Sunday School Teacher*. He immediately began to prepare and publish Sunday school lessons, known as the *National Series*, which gained such great popularity that the *National Sunday School Teacher*, in whose columns it appeared, attained a circulation of thirty-five thousand copies within three or four years. The *Scholar's Lesson Paper*, prepared by the same author, gained a circulation of more than three hundred and fifty thousand copies within the same period of time.³⁰ It is estimated that before the present *International* plan was agreed upon three million children were using the lessons issued from Chicago.³¹ Therefore, because of their importance and widespread usage we now turn to an examination of the *National Series* prepared and published by Mr. Eggleston.

The *National Series* began in 1867 with the second-year course entitled *The Second Year With Jesus*. The lesson plan for the year includes the parables, conversations, and discourses of Jesus. The plan followed by Mr. Eggleston showed some variation from that of Mr. Vincent in his *Second Year With Jesus*. Three of the differences are noted.

(1) It was Eggleston's plan to give a lesson for each Sunday instead of using one lesson two Sundays, as Mr. Vincent had originally announced in the *Sunday School Teacher*; (2) more information was placed on the question papers for pupils and less on the notes for teachers; (3) when necessary, special hints were given to "Infant" and "Bible" classes.

The suggestions of Mr. Eggleston for using the lessons are as follows:

1. The Bible alone should be used in the class.
2. Teachers should have freedom in asking questions in the class.
3. The text of the lesson should be committed to memory by the class during the week, and each scholar should read the passages prescribed for the

³⁰ Sampey, John R., *The International Lesson System*, pp. 61 and 62. Fleming H. Revell Company, publishers.

³¹ *World's Sunday School Convention*, 1889, p. 116.

home readings. Each scholar should be expected to repeat perfectly the Golden Text for each Sabbath.

4. Let the analysis of each lesson, and the "Central Thought" be given in the scholar's own words.³²

We turn to the lessons themselves and upon examination we find that there are minute variations, but the general plan is so carefully executed that one lesson may be studied as typical of them all. The following lesson plan was intended for the use of teachers:

LESSON XIX

The Rich Man and Lazarus

Lesson: Luke XVI, 19-31. Home readings: Matt. XIX, 16-30.

Golden Text: Mark VII, 36.

Notes

The occasion. [The lesson note here is that the parable was given because of the derision of the covetous Pharisees, who saw that the parable of the unjust steward rebuked their sordid living.

It is pointed out that the parable is a fictitious story which nevertheless contains a moral].

Purple. The ancient purple dye was extremely costly because it was produced from the shell of a certain shell fish, and, as the amount secured from each fish was small, it would be costly.

Fine linen. This was an exceedingly costly fabric.

Fared sumptuously. This was the daily occurrence. His extravagant dress and food were the daily custom.

A certain beggar—Lazarus. The name is a contraction of Eliezer and means "the help of God." This was an intimation of the character of Lazarus.

With the crumbs. His food consisted of the waste things from the table of the rich man. In his misery he had companionship with the dogs.

The beggar died. There is no mention of any funeral.³³

Suggestions to Teachers

[The teachers are informed that the lesson should be taught from the standpoint of contrasts]. 1. Draw from the pupils a description of the abundance of the rich man in contrast to the misery of the beggar. 2. Contrast the empty pomp of the rich man's funeral with the triumphal bearing away of Lazarus. 3. Contrast the earthly power of Lazarus with the richness of his eternal life. 4. Contrast the rich man's luxury with his cry for a drink of water. 5. Contrast the rich man in torment with the beggar in Paradise.

Lessons

1. The Vanity of Riches.
2. Infinite riches of the humblest child of God.
3. Believe the Scriptures and not wait for signs and wonders.

³² *National Sunday School Teacher*, 1868.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 147, 1867.

Illustration

The loss of the soul—What, if it be lawful to indulge such a thought, what would be the funeral obsequies of a lost soul? Where shall we find the tears fit to be wept at such a spectacle? Or, could we realize the calamity in all its extent, what tokens of commiseration and concern would be deemed equal to the occasion? Would it suffice for the sun to veil his light, and the moon her brightness? To cover the ocean with mourning, and the heavens with sackcloth? Or, were the whole fabric of nature to become animated and vocal, would it be possible for her to utter a groan too deep, or a cry too piercing, to express the magnitude and extent of such a catastrophe?

Since the lesson plan considered above was expected to serve the needs of the teacher, it will be of interest to examine the lesson plan which was prepared for the pupil on the same lesson text.

LESSON No. XIX. MAY 12, 1867²⁴*The Rich Man and Lazarus*

Lesson text to be committed to memory: Luke XVI, 19-31.

Home readings: Matt. XIX, 16-30.

Golden Text

For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Mark VII: 36.

Central Thought

That it is better to be a beggar and gain immortal life, than to have all worldly riches, and lose our souls.

Analysis

I. The Rich Man's Sin. 1. He lacked faith. He did not realize that God's love and God's service are the most important things in the world. 2. He neglected God's Word. He would not hear "Moses and the Prophets." 3. He lacked true benevolence, else he would have ministered to Lazarus of his abundance. 4. He spent upon his own desires that which God had intrusted him. . . . [There were two other paragraphs, one on the character of Lazarus and the other contrasting Lazarus and the rich man.]

II. Character of Lazarus. The name signified "The Help of God." From this we infer that Christ intended to say that he placed his trust in God.

III. The contrast. Lazarus, poor, hungry, suffering, the companion of dogs, and without a funeral, is carried to Abraham's bosom, to a place of joy. The other, rich, proud, faring sumptuously, honored, buried in pomp awakens in the place of torment.

General Questions

Can you repeat the Golden Text and the lesson? Have you read the passages prescribed for home readings? Will you give the central thought in your own words as well as you can?

²⁴ *National Sunday School Teacher*, p. 152ff, 1867.

Analytical Questions

- I. 1. In what respect did the rich man lack faith?
2. How did he treat the Scriptures?
3. In what way did he show his lack of benevolence? How did he differ from the good Samaritan?
4. Who gave him his wealth? What kind of clothes did he wear? What kind of food did he eat? Whose steward was he? Was he faithful?

II. What is the meaning of the word "Lazarus"? Would the suffering and poverty of Lazarus have saved him without a trust in God?

III. Are we told that Lazarus was buried? Where did the angels carry him? What is meant by this? What kind of a funeral do you think the rich man had? Where was he when he lifted up his eyes? What did he see? Give the conversation between him and Abraham. What part of the Bible is meant by "Moses and the Prophets"?

Concluding Questions

Is your treasure in heaven or on earth? Do you trust in God like Lazarus, or in the world like the rich man? What, then, is your future destiny?

Some of the questions lead to thought upon the part of the pupil, such as, "Would the suffering and poverty of Lazarus have saved him without a trust in God?" For the most part, however, the questions are not in keeping with the problems of developing youth. The lesson is entirely material-centered and the psychological approach is not attempted. The lesson texts lack adaptations to different age groups, which the lessons by Vincent afforded. It must be stated in this connection, however, that the lessons known as the *National Series* were not expected to be used for the "Infant" classes. Their needs were supplied by a different type of biblical-lesson treatment, more suitable to their age.

An examination of the lessons for the year 1868 reveals very little change in lesson treatment from the previous year except that the Bible text is printed with the lessons, which was not the case for the year 1867. The other features show no change.

An examination of the lessons for the year 1869 shows with one exception no perceptible change. The notes for *Teachers and Bible Class Scholars* adhere to the adopted plan—expository notes, suggestions to teachers, and practical lessons (here called topics). The pupil's lesson leaves show no change, but follow the adopted plan—lesson text, Golden Text, Central Thought,

Topics for Meditation, Exposition, and Questions for Study. The exception to the regular plan of lesson treatment consisted of a new feature called "Treasure of Illustrations," intended for the use of teachers. The illustrations were drawn from commentaries, authorities, missionary collections, and so forth. In order that we may have a clear idea of the new feature, the illustrations accompanying Lesson II, for January 10, 1869, will be noted as typical of all.

"The Contrast. Rom. VIII: 6-10." This lesson presents the other side of the picture of Lesson I, January 3, 1869, which was entitled "Peace with God."

Illustrations

A Sinner cannot enjoy God's favor. This thought may be aptly illustrated by the following incident in the life of Nelson: A French officer was once brought into his presence. He went boldly up to the great admiral and held out his hand. Nelson drew back. "Give me your sword," said he, "and then I will take your hand." (*Biblical Treasury*.)

The Privilege of Adoption. When the Danish missionaries in India appointed some of their converts to translate a catechism in which it was mentioned as the privilege of Christians to become the Sons of God, one of the translators, startled at so bold a saying, as he considered it, said, "It is too much; let me rather render it, they shall be permitted to kiss his feet" (*Biblical Treasury*).

In like manner, illustrations were provided for all of the lessons throughout the year. The number varied from two to five or six to a lesson.

The lessons for the year 1870 bore the title "The Life of Jesus the Christ." This year's course of fifty-two lessons begins with the birth of Jesus and includes the principal events of his life and ministry. An examination of the lessons for the year reveals one new feature in method of lesson treatment, or at least a greater emphasis on an old feature. The lessons for 1870 give a large place to additional material in the form of extracts from commentaries and Scripture illustrations, which were intended to throw added light on the lesson studied. To make this point clear we shall note in this connection the extract from a representative commentary and the Scripture illustrations accompanying one of the lessons:

"January 30th. The Star in the East. Matt. II: 1-12."

Following the exposition of the lesson (lesson notes) there is a section called "Extracts from Commentaries":

Verse 1. The magi mentioned in the text belonged to the earlier class of eastern sages, whose researches were sincere and earnest—*Lange*.

Verse 2. Now we learn from astronomical calculations that a remarkable conjunction of planets of our system took place in a short time before the birth of our Lord. In the year of Rome 747, on the 20th of May, there was a conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn, on the 20th degree of the constellation Pisces, close to the first point of Aries, which was the part of the Hebrew noted in astrological science as that in which the signs denoted the greatest and most noble events. On the 27th of October, in the same year, another conjunction of the same planets took place in the 16th degree of Pisces; and on the 12th of November a third, in the 15th degree of the same sign. On these last two occasions the planets were so near that an ordinary eye would regard them as one star of surpassing brightness. Supposing the magi to have seen the first of these conjunctions, they saw it actually in the east; for on the 20th of May it would rise shortly before the sun. If they performed the route from Jerusalem to Bethlehem in the evening as is implied, the November conjunction in 15 degrees of Pisces would be before them in the direction of Bethlehem, coming to the meridian about 8 o'clock P. M. These coincidents would seem to form a remarkable coincidence with the history in our text. *Alfred*.

Scripture Illustrations

1. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm. Dan. 1: 20.

2. There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a scepter shall come out of Israel. Num. XXIV: 17.

3. But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Micah V: 2.

4. And Esther spake yet again before the king, and fell down at his feet. Esther VIII: 3.

5. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable, unto God, which is your reasonable service. Rom. XII: 1.³⁵

The lessons for 1871 are entitled "The Words of Jesus the Christ" and the method of lesson treatment for this year shows a modification. It has been the custom heretofore to publish one lesson plan for the teacher and another for the pupils in separate pamphlets, as we have indicated. For example, take the two plans for the year 1870 and we find the following:

³⁵ *National Sunday School Teacher*, p. 23, 1870.

For Teachers

Lesson XXVII, Death of John the Baptist. Mark VI: 14-29.

Preliminary notes.
Exposition.
Extracts from commentaries.
Scripture illustrations.

For Pupils

Lesson No. XXVII, July 3rd, 1870.
The Death of John the Baptist.
Scripture Lesson, Mark VI: 14-29.
Golden Text.
Central thought.
Topic for meditation.
Words of explanation.
Questions for study.³⁶

In the published lessons for 1871 the two plans were merged and appeared as one lesson plan, intended for both teacher and scholar. To make the characteristics of the modified plan specific, and to set forth the new type of lesson treatment, a typical lesson is examined here:

LESSON XXXIX, Sept. 14, 1871, THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN

Luke XVIII: 9-14. [Scripture text printed]

Golden Text: God be merciful to me a sinner. Luke XVIII: 13.

Central Thought: Humility before God.

Topic for Meditation: Justified.

Notes for Teachers and Bible Class Scholars.

.....
Practical reflections. 1. We are miserable sinners. 2. We cannot make God our debtor by anything we do. 3. If we trust his mercy, he is faithful and just to forgive.

Extracts from Commentaries.

.....

Questions

Questions for study: What can you tell of the sect called Pharisees? What did the Pharisee thank God for? What sin did he mention that he was not guilty of? What allusions did he make to the publicans? How often did he fast? What does he say of paying tithes?

A study of the lessons issued in the *National Teacher* by the Rev. Edward Eggleston may be summed up as follows:

1. The lesson plan of treatment was largely expository, and for that reason the lessons were better suited to adults than to children and youth, who care more for story and biography.

2. Mr. Eggleston is to be commended for pointing out to teachers the method of teaching the lesson. For example, in

³⁶ *National Sunday School Teacher*, p. 23, 1870.

Lesson XIX, 1867, it is suggested that the lesson be taught from the standpoint of contrasts. Also the extracts from commentaries were valuable to teachers in that they furnished much information on the lesson; and in 1869 a section called *Treasure of Illustrations* was added to the lesson to explain the truth taught. Many times, however, the illustrations were not apt and were often ambiguous, as in the example on page 227 of this study. In 1871 the separate plans for teacher and pupil were fused into one. This, it appears, must have been a backward step. The best lesson series of to-day, such as the *Abingdon Week Day Religious Education Texts*, the *Constructive Studies in Religion*, and the *Completely Graded Series* make provision for a separate manual for the use of teachers.

3. We have already criticized the lessons issued by Dr. John H. Vincent as being centered primarily in material rather than in the pupil. The chief object was that of imparting information about the Bible rather than using the material to illustrate how Christian virtues may be established and vices shunned. The same general criticism is applicable to the Eggleston lessons.

4. For the most part the lesson material is better suited to adults than to children because the concepts largely relate to adult experiences. For example, the central thought for Lesson XIX, May 12, 1867, is, "It is better to be a beggar and gain immortal life than to have all wordly riches and lose our souls." Other lessons for consideration on this same Sunday center around the concepts, "Vanity of riches," and the "duty to believe in the Scriptures and not wait for signs and wonders." In Lesson XXXIX for the year 1871 one of the practical reflections is, "We are miserable sinners." These concepts and others like them lead one to the conclusion that the experiences of the child are not often considered in these lessons.

The *National Series of Sunday School Lessons* came to an end in 1871, but the *National Sunday School Teacher* continued to publish lesson helps for pupils and teachers, selected by a lesson committee, and intended for uniform use throughout the country. Before we examine the *International Uniform Lessons*, as they are called, we must discuss the historical setting of the new

system of lessons. This will involve a consideration of the interested persons, responsible organizations, and the setting up of the machinery for lesson making leading to the preparation and promotion of the new series.

B. F. JACOB'S DREAM OF A UNIFORM LESSON

Although the series of lessons prepared by Vincent and Eggleston did not have a nation-wide use, in two ways they really constituted a very significant step in the progress of uniform lessons. First, they were widely adopted by Sunday schools in and near Chicago, New York, and other large cities.³⁷ The lessons prepared by Mr. Vincent were used most widely by the Methodist Episcopal Church and to a limited extent by other denominations.³⁸ The *National Teacher's Magazine*, of Chicago, which published the *National Series*, had a wide circulation and was a positive influence in the direction of uniform lessons.³⁹ It is estimated that before the present international plan of uniform lessons had been agreed on, three million children were using the lessons issued from Chicago.

Second, a keen-thinking expansionist and propagandist, Benjamin F. Jacobs, dreamed of extending the idea of Vincent's and Eggleston's lessons over the nation, so that all denominations throughout the world might use them.⁴⁰

Mr. Jacobs held three very definite objectives for Sunday-school lessons. They were: first, one lesson for all ages; second, one lesson for all schools throughout the world; and, third, expositions of the lessons in all religious and secular papers that might be inclined to publish them. Thus we see his general agreement with Mr. Vincent, who declared himself in favor of a uniform lesson for all ages.⁴¹ As a result of the efforts of Mr. Jacobs, the spread and acceptance of the Vincent and Eggleston lessons, and the general unfavorable reaction to the old question-book method, there developed a growing consciousness that sev-

³⁷ *Official Report of the Eleventh Sunday School Convention*, p. 41, 1905.

³⁸ Sampey, John R., *The International Lesson System*, p. 61. Fleming H. Revell Company, publishers.

³⁹ *Official Report of the Eleventh Sunday School Convention*, p. 41, 1905.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 41, 1905.

⁴¹ Vincent, John H., *Two Years with Jesus*, preface.

eral or many schools might very well study the same lesson, which would make it unnecessary for each school to provide a lesson course of its own. Furthermore, it was being advocated that there might be just one lesson for all children regardless of age or experience.⁴² A crystallization of this feeling began to take form in the National Convention of the Sunday School Association in 1869, when the superintendents' section indorsed the plan of uniform lessons, as proposed by Mr. Jacobs.⁴³

THE PUBLISHERS' MEETING

The next step in the direction of the new system was taken by the convention of 1869, which appointed a committee to formulate plans for further action. This committee, in turn, requested the National Executive Committee to call the lesson publishers into conference. Their efforts were successful, and, at the request of the National Executive Committee, the lesson publishers representing the various denominations met for conference in August, 1871. The twenty-nine publishers and writers present at this meeting had as their chief subject for consideration the problem of a national uniform system of lessons. They found upon investigation that there were over thirty magazines and papers publishing lesson notes and expositions upon almost a dozen independent series, the lessons of Eggleston and Vincent heading the list.⁴⁴

The publishers appointed a committee to make a selection of lessons for the year 1872 as a trial project. This committee was under the necessity of determining a basis of procedure for the selection of lessons. Some of the members held that the lessons should be largely doctrinal; others felt that the emphasis should be placed on religious duties, and still others suggested that the church year be made the basis of selection.⁴⁵

A difference in opinion might be expected when we consider the fact that representatives of the principal churches, such as the Lutheran, Episcopal, Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian,

⁴² Cope, Henry F., *The Evolution of the Sunday School*, p. 105.

⁴³ *Official Report of the Eleventh Sunday School Convention*, p. 42, 1905.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 42, 1905.

⁴⁵ Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union*, p. 299.

were under the necessity of fixing a principle to serve as a basis of lesson selection. Some of the lesson books of the previous "Babel" period emphasized doctrine, and naturally they had a following. It was to be expected that the Lutherans and Dutch Reformed would stress the doctrinal feature. The representatives of the Episcopal Church were interested in the church year with special reference to "Advent" and the "Lenten Season." Other churches which placed less emphasis upon doctrines and the church year desired the chief emphasis to be placed upon Christian duties, such as reverence, Sabbath-keeping, and parental and filial duties.

At this point a compromise was reached to the effect that the lessons should be selected from the Bible as a whole. The committee accepted a scheme which included a study of the entire Scriptures in the hope that the plan would incorporate all three of the suggestions.⁴⁶

Having arrived at a theoretical basis of procedure, the committee next faced a practical difficulty. Several of the publishers were already promoting lesson courses of their own, and naturally were anxious to take care of their interests and have their plans adopted. This situation might be expected since there were at least fifteen publishing houses issuing as many series of lessons.⁴⁷ A few of the more popular series were the *National Series*, the lessons published in the *National Sunday School Teacher*, edited by Edward Eggleston; the *Berean Series*, edited by John H. Vincent and used in the Methodist Episcopal Church; the *Westminster Series*, edited by Henry C. Cook and used in the Presbyterian Church; and the lessons published by the American Sunday School Union, known as the *Explanatory and Union Series*, 1868-1872.⁴⁸ Again, at this point a compromise was reached and of the lessons chosen for 1872, two quarters were selected from Mr. Eggleston's *National Series*, one quarter from Mr. Vincent's lessons, and one quarter compiled by the committee itself.⁴⁹ Indirectly, this appears to be a further proof of

⁴⁶ Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union*, p. 300.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

⁴⁹ *Official Report of the Eleventh Sunday School Convention*, p. 42.

the popularity and importance of the two main series of curricula, which prepared the way for the Uniform Lessons. Furthermore, it may be noted here that the mode of selecting the lessons adopted by the first committee was very prophetic of the methods of future bodies which were to work on that same problem. The aim of the succeeding committees was to cover the entire Bible in Cycles alternating between the Old and New Testaments.

THE TRIAL LIST OF 1872

The "Trial List" of uniform lessons authorized by the publishers to be used in 1872 was looked upon only as an experiment. [It had become evident to the publishers that a sentiment for uniform lessons was gathering strength, and this experiment was counted on to test the demand, and serve as a basis for further procedure, if the trial list proved acceptable.]

The course of study as outlined by the committee for 1872 contained twelve lessons selected from the Acts of the Apostles, Hebrews, and Revelation called *Jesus After His Ascension*, and a review; twelve lessons on Elisha, Israel, Judah, and a review; twelve lessons from the Epistles, and a review; and twelve lessons on Daniel and his times, and a review.⁵⁰ This distribution shows that one half of the time was devoted to each Testament, the alternation occurring quarterly. The "Trial List" in detail, by quarters and Sundays, is printed in the Appendix, page 327.

THE NATIONAL CONVENTION OF 1872

The National Sunday School Convention met in Indianapolis in the year 1872. Its chief subject for consideration was the adoption or the rejection of a uniform system of lessons for the Sunday school. Mr. Benjamin F. Jacobs believed that the supreme moment for his dream to be realized had arrived and led the discussion before the convention, by declaring that uniform lessons for all ages and for all Sunday schools would be better for pupils, teachers, parents, pastors, and lesson writers.⁵¹ Dr. Edward Eggleston opposed the plan, saying that he considered

⁵⁰ *Eclectic Library*, 1872.

⁵¹ *Official Report, Eleventh International Convention*, p. 43, 1905.

it a step backward.⁵² He said, among other things, "The inevitable tendency of this slavish uniformity will be to a more exclusive use of the lesson than before, and the denominations will not be brought any nearer together, but will really be taken farther apart."⁵³ He felt that uniformity for all ages was not advisable, and that a plan could be devised that would better serve the needs and interests of the various age groups, and especially that the youngest children should not be expected to study the same lesson that had been prepared for adults. Dr. John H. Vincent declared himself thoroughly in favor of this scheme that would secure national uniformity in Sunday-school lessons.⁵⁴

Mr. Jacobs had come to the convention determined that his plan should be carried out, and to secure action he presented a resolution as follows:

Resolved, That the convention appoint a committee, to consist of five clergymen and five laymen, to select a course of Bible lessons for a series of years not exceeding seven, which shall, as far as they may decide possible, embrace a general study of the whole Bible, alternating between the Old and New Testaments semiannually or quarterly, as they shall deem best; and to publish a list of such lessons as fully as possible, and at least for the two years next ensuing, as early as the first of August, 1872; and that this convention recommend their adoption by the Sunday schools of the whole country; and that this committee have power to fill any vacancies that may occur in their number by reason of the inability of any member to serve.⁵⁵

The resolution was adopted by an overwhelming vote (only ten dissenting). The delegates vented their enthusiasm by singing the doxology. The Uniform System of Lessons was launched. "The dream was realized, and Vincent's lesson idea and Jacob's world-wide plan of uniformity became incarnate."⁵⁶

THE LESSON COMMITTEE AND ITS WORK

The Convention of 1872 appointed a committee to prepare a list of uniform lessons in accordance with the resolution of Mr.

⁵² *Official Report, Eleventh International Convention*, p. 43.

⁵³ Gilbert, Simeon, *The Lesson System*, p. 55.

⁵⁴ *Official Report, Eleventh International Convention*, p. 43, 1905.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 42, 1905.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 43, 1905.

Jacobs. Since this convention was attended by representatives from Canada, Great Britain, and India, the convention changed its name to the International Convention and the lesson committee created by that body became known as the International Lesson Committee, which body, with changes in personnel, has continued to select lessons up to the present time.

The first lesson committee set to work along the specific lines laid down by the International Convention for its guidance. The specific instructions were as follows:

1. Alternation each year between the Old and New Testaments.
2. Beginning with Genesis to select from the Old Testament in chronological order.
3. To spend a part of each year in studying the life and ministry of Christ, beginning with Matthew and passing in order through the Gospels.
4. To follow with lessons on the Apostles, the planting of the church, and the doctrines of the New Testament as contained in the Epistles.⁵⁷

The first lesson committee thus began its work under specific directions to select from the Bible by parts and in chronological order. As a matter of fact, the general plan under which the first committee operated was adopted as a standard by other committees with enough modification to include other biblical doctrines, personalities, and events.

It was not the business of the Lesson Committee to issue helps, and it has never done so. The province of the committee has been to select the Uniform Lesson text. The publishing houses which have adopted the uniform Scripture lessons have proceeded to supplement them as they deemed advisable with helps, analyses, questions, and explanations. The Lesson Committee from the very first confined itself to the task of selecting the lesson titles and the Scripture text, but, as time went on, the functions of the committee were broadened so as to include the selection of the Golden Text, memory verses, devotional reading, and additional Scripture material as supplemental to the lesson. These changes will be indicated in the study of the lesson Cycles.

⁵⁷ *Official Report, Eleventh International Sunday School Convention*, p. 44.

EXPANSION AND DEVELOPMENT

As indicated, the *International Lessons* were launched in 1872 on a wave of tremendous enthusiasm. The delegates to the First International Convention went back to their respective fields of service pledged to the new plan. The new lessons were accepted gladly by the Sunday schools of the United States and were widely used. The old question books were swept aside, and the uniform system was universally adopted. In this connection the words of Secretary Warren Randolph are significant: "These lessons are largely in use throughout our own land by Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Episcopalians, Congregationalists, Lutherans, Moravians, Friends, members of the Reformed Churches, Adventists—a mighty host, to be enumerated only by millions. . . . Thus our lessons have found their way to the Sunday schools along the shores of the Atlantic, down the slopes of the Pacific, and through all the region which lies between. East and West and North and South have come to love and use them."⁵⁸

REFERENCES

- Cope, Henry F., *The Evolution of the Sunday School*.
 Gilbert, Simeon, *The Lesson System*.
 Graves, Frank P., *A Student's History of Education*.
 Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union*.
 Sampey, John Richard, *The International Lesson System*.

⁵⁸ *The First International Sunday School Convention*, pp. 44 and 45, 1872.

CHAPTER XI

CONTENT AND CHARACTER OF THE LESSON
CYCLES, 1873-1925

THE purpose of this chapter is to examine the content of the Uniform Lessons by Cycles, covering the period of fifty-two years, and to indicate their distribution over the various portions of the Bible. Enough of the connecting history will be indicated to enable us to understand the various expansions, criticisms, and modifications.

Outlines of the *International Lessons* may be secured from the American Sunday School Union or from the International Lesson Committee direct, but they do nothing more than list the portion of the Bible and the year or part thereof in which a given topic was studied. It seems advisable in a study of this character to go further than that and describe the outstanding characteristics within each Cycle, as well as the Cycle as a whole, and call attention to any points of similarity and difference that may exist between one Cycle and another.¹

The first Cycle, 1873-1879.² For the year 1873 the Lesson Committee selected only the title and the Scripture text. It seems inappropriate that the two quarters on the Old Testament were not given consecutively. The system of lesson arrangement for 1874 is superior to that of 1873 in that there is not the break in the study of the Old Testament as in the previous year. The Lesson Committee in 1874, for the first time, selected a Golden Text, a feature that has remained ever since. The year 1876 marks a backward step in one respect and an improvement in another. The improvement lies in the fact

¹ A complete list of the lessons by Cycles, including the years and quarters, will be found in the Appendix, page 329.

² An *Aeroplane View of the International Sunday School Lessons by Years and by Portions*, published by the International Lesson Committee.

that the Scripture selections were of greater length than formerly. The backward step was made when the committee, in deference to the wishes of the London School Union, decided to alternate between the Old and New Testaments on a quarterly basis. To offer one quarter's lessons in Acts and then swing back to the Old Testament for a quarter and then back again to Acts for the concluding quarter was a pedagogical monstrosity. The saving grace about the situation is that the Committee changed its plan for the succeeding year. The outstanding characteristic of the lessons for 1877 consists of the biographical emphasis in both the Old and New Testament studies. The lessons are planned so as to revolve around personalities.

The Committee decided that, inasmuch as it had included many of the narrative and biographical sections of the Bible in the previous years, 1879 should be devoted to an eclectic study of both Testaments. Accordingly, the first half of the year was spent in a study of the poetical and prophetical portions scattered throughout the Old Testament and the last half was given over to an eclectic study of the Epistles and Revelation. An examination of the lessons for the year reveals a decided lack of the narrative and the biographical, and a decided emphasis upon the didactic. Forty-five of the lessons are entirely didactic, making their adaptation to all ages exceedingly difficult.

Even before the first Lesson Committee had completed its work there were criticisms and requests for change. In 1875 the Lesson Committee was requested through the International Convention to make provision for temperance lessons, but did not do so. By the year 1878 four objections to the lessons had taken form: (1) They were said to be scrappy and fragmentary; (2) There was no room for the denominations to stress their special doctrines; (3) Not enough provisions were made for lessons on civic reform and missions, and (4) The lessons were not arranged so as to take account of the festival occasions of the church year.

A backward glance over the studies for the seven years will reveal the truth of most of the contentions as enumerated in the objections.

The second Cycle, 1880-1886. The Second Lesson Committee desired to continue the general plan as adopted by the first committee. In the year 1880 the Lesson Committee added a feature to their general plan, so that in addition to selecting the lesson title, the lesson text and the Golden Text, it suggested memory verses to be committed by the children.³ In the lessons for 1881 the twelfth lesson in each quarter was reserved for review and the thirteenth for a lesson to be selected by the individual Sunday school. This, in a measure, offset the criticism that the denominations had no chance for denominational teaching. The year 1882 is to be noted, for this was the first time in the lessons scheme that an entire year had been given to any book of the Bible. The lessons for this year were selected from Mark. This arrangement made it possible to deal with this short book in a fairly satisfactory way from the chronological standpoint at least. This year, like the previous one, set aside the thirteenth lesson in each quarter for review or a lesson to be selected by the school.

The year 1885 reverts to the quarter basis throughout but with a better sequence than for the year 1876, which also followed the quarter division. The first two quarters mark the completion of the studies in the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles. The fourth quarter closes with a study of Isaiah.

It is evident that the second Cycle (1880-1886) was built on the same general plan as the first, but it appears to be less fragmentary, and more consecutive. It also made provision for the consideration of lessons selected by the school itself. The two characteristics of this Cycle were (1) the semiannual alternation between the Old and the New Testaments except in 1882 and 1886, and (2) the reserving of the thirteenth Sunday of each quarter for a lesson to be determined by the school, during the first four years of the Cycle.

The third Cycle, 1887-1893. The lessons from the Old Testament begin with the creation of the world as described in the first chapter of Genesis, and end with the giving of the Ten Commandments. The lessons are biographical and narrative.

³ Sampey, John R., *The International Lesson System*, p. 108.

The studies in Matthew go through the Gospel chronologically and consider the life and ministry of Jesus.

The lessons for the entire year 1890 are devoted to a study of Jesus and of Luke's Gospel. The study begins with the first chapter of the Gospel and covers the book chapter by chapter, treating the life, miracles, and teachings of Jesus. In a similar way the selections for the year 1882 had been devoted to a study of Mark.

The Third Lesson Committee very happily provided two years of consecutive study in the Cycle, one in Matthew and one in Luke. This was a step forward. The Committee further provided for three optional lessons for the last Sunday of each quarter, a review, a temperance lesson, and a missionary lesson. This third Cycle (1887-1893) marks the third time in which the Bible had been covered in Cycles of seven years each. In 1894 the Cycle was reduced to six years, this interval becoming the standard length of the Cycles until 1918 when it was lengthened to eight years.

With the completion of the third Cycle, representing twenty-one years of lesson selection, it might be profitable to take a backward look to see just how the Committee had covered the Bible three times in the period of twenty-one years. Including the special and optional lessons the selections were as follows:

	<i>Number of Lessons</i>		<i>Number of Lessons</i>
Genesis.....	64	Nehemiah.....	10
Exodus.....	43	Esther.....	3
Leviticus.....	11	Job.....	6
Numbers.....	10	Psalms.....	24
Deuteronomy.....	5	Proverbs.....	15
Joshua.....	29	Ecclesiastes.....	5
Judges.....	10	Isaiah.....	23
Ruth.....	3	Jeremiah.....	9
1 Samuel.....	40	Ezekiel.....	3
2 Samuel.....	18	Daniel.....	15
1 Kings.....	38	Hosea.....	2
2 Kings.....	33	Joel.....	1
1 Chronicles.....	2	Amos.....	2
2 Chronicles.....	20	Jonah.....	5
Ezra.....	3	Micah.....	1

	<i>Number of Lessons</i>		<i>Number of Lessons</i>
Nahum.....	1	Philippians.....	3
Haggai.....	1	Colossians.....	2
Zechariah.....	3	1 Thessalonians.....	3
Malachi.....	3	2 Thessalonians.....	1
Matthew.....	95	1 Timothy.....	2
Mark.....	97	2 Timothy.....	1
Luke.....	97	Titus.....	1
John.....	79	Hebrews.....	5
Acts.....	130	James.....	2
Romans.....	12	1 Peter.....	2
1 Corinthians.....	11	2 Peter.....	1
2 Corinthians.....	3	1 John.....	3
Galatians.....	5	Revelation.....	11 ⁴
Ephesians.....	4		

Of the 1,031 lessons selected during the period of twenty-one years, 461 were from the Old Testament and 570 from the New Testament.⁵ The Old Testament books from which there are no selections are Song of Solomon, Lamentations of Jeremiah, Obadiah, and Habakkuk.⁶ Of the New Testament books no selections were made from Philemon, 2 John, 3 John, and Jude.⁷

The fourth Cycle, 1894-1900. The fourth Cycle covered a period of six years instead of seven. The studies for the fourth Cycle possess several laudable features which are noted here. The character of Jesus is thoroughly studied, the lessons for one year (1894-1895) emphasizing the life of Jesus. Eighteen months are devoted to the life and ministry of Jesus as recorded in Matthew, Luke, and John. The Cycle closes with a year's study of the life and teachings of Jesus. The lessons in the Gospels are given during the first half of the year so that the death of Jesus would not be studied at the close of the year when his birth should be emphasized. This was an advantage to those churches following the Christian year.

The Old Testament lessons for 1895, 1896, 1898, and 1899 present an historical, biographical, and chronological history of the Hebrews prior to the monarchy, the Kingdoms of Israel and

⁴ Randolph, Warren, *Seventh International Sunday School Convention*, 1893, p. 172.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

Judah, and their disintegration, the return of the Judæan exiles, and some choice ethical and moral lessons from the Old Testament. The ethical and moral lessons are: "The New Heart," from Ezekiel; "Ezekiel's Vision," "Power Through the Spirit" (Zechariah); "Joy in God's House" (Psalms); "Keeping the Sabbath," and "Fruits of Right and Wrong" (Malachi, chapter 3). It is very evident, therefore, that the Cycle provided for a more consecutive study of the main divisions of the Bible, a provision which has been continued with the improvement of the Uniform Lessons.

About 1890 there arose very sharp criticisms against the Uniform Lessons on the ground that they were fragmentary and could not be adapted to the youngest children. This agitation was keenly felt by the fourth International Lesson Committee. No doubt this criticism had much to do in securing more consecutive studies upon the most vital points in both Testaments.

Cycles five, six, and seven, 1901-1917. It seems advisable, since the respective descriptions are brief, to describe the three Cycles together. The fifth Cycle (1901-1906) appears to present an excellent grouping of lessons from the chronological standpoint at least, with one exception. It seems rather unfortunate that the lessons for the first half of 1902 on the book of Acts and continued in the first six months of 1903 should have been broken by a half year of Old Testament study. Otherwise the consecutive order is well adhered to. The sixth Cycle (1907-1912) is unique up to this time in the length of time given to the several portions of the Bible. For example:

1907 January-December.	Stories of the Patriarchs and Judges.
1909 January-December.	Expansion of the Early Church.
1910 January-December.	The Gospel of the Kingdom.
1911 January-December.	Kings and Prophets of Judah and Israel.

Cycle seven (1913-1917), like the one preceding it, gives a greater length of time to the particular portion of the Bible chosen for lesson study. The last two cycles especially are an improvement over the earlier ones. They more nearly coincide with the festival occasions of the church year, especially in the life of Jesus,

and they are far more consecutive and less "scrappy and fragmentary" than the first four or five Cycles.

The eighth Cycle, 1918-1925. The Cycle of 1918-1925 incorporates several changes and is issued under a new title, *Improved Uniform Lessons*. In order that the changes and improvements may be clearly understood, a quotation from the secretary of the International Lesson Committee is included here:

The International Sunday School Lesson Committee decided at its meeting in Chicago, April 6, 1915, to issue Improved Uniform Lessons for an eight-year cycle; uniformity is maintained by the use of a common title, a common brief lesson text for printing, and a common Golden Text. All the teachers are encouraged to read the lesson material. A Devotional Reading has been chosen which may be used in the worship of the school in lieu of the passage printed as the common lesson for the day.

Having thus sought to conserve the benefits of the Uniform System, the Committee decided to seek to adapt the lessons, as thoroughly as possible, to the various departments of the school. Special topics, special memory verses, and additional material have been designated wherever it seemed possible thereby to make the lessons more helpful to pupils in the different departments. Up to and including 1923, special adaptations have been made for four different groups, viz.: Primary, Junior, Intermediate and Senior, and Young People and Adult pupils; but Group Graded Lessons are provided, beginning with 1924, as a substitute for the adaptations to Primary and Junior pupils. These Primary and Junior adaptations, however, will be sent to those who desire them, in the form of a supplement for 1924.

The eight-year cycle has been chosen with the view (1) to the incorporation of several short topical courses, in addition to the usual series on a chronological basis; (2) the committee has also had in mind the desirability of a more frequent survey of the entire Bible with varying methods of approach than was possible under the six-year cycle; (3) it was desired also to harmonize the period of the cycle with the newly adopted quadrennial conventions of the International Association.

The topical courses are designed in general to provide surveys of important biblical truth and discussions of important aspects of Christian living, gaining light from all parts of the Bible, and systematizing more carefully and thoroughly than is possible in a series exclusively chronological.⁸

The quarter from July to September, 1918, is entitled "Studies in the Christian Life" and represents one of the innovations of the *Improved Uniform Lessons*. For the first time in forty-five years a topical course has been arranged. The principal themes of the Christian life incorporated in the lesson were: "Beginning the Christian life," "Reading God's word," "Praying," "Obey-

⁸ *Improved Uniform Lessons*, International Lesson Committee, Ira M. Price, secretary.

ing God," "Helping Others," "Working in the Christian life," "Speaking for Christ," "Christian Giving," "Conquering Evil," and "What It Means To Be a Christian."

In the year 1919 the second quarter is a study of "Some Great Teachings of the Bible," and includes topics such as "God Our Heavenly Father," "Christ Our Saviour," "The Holy Spirit Our Helper," "Man Made in the Image of God," "Sin and its consequences," "The Grace of God," "Repentance," "Faith," "Obedience," "Prayer," "Love," "The Church," "Baptism," "The Lord's Supper," "Christian Worship," "Social Responsibility," "The Kingdom of God," "The Future Life," and "The Holy Scriptures." The lessons are drawn from both the Old and New Testaments, six from the Old, sixteen from the New, and one from both.

An interesting set of studies from the New Testament beginning with October, 1920, and ending with the first quarter of 1921, stresses the teachings of the Kingdom of Heaven, particularly as found in the Gospel of Matthew. Representative themes are: "The Growth of the Kingdom," Matt. 13. 1-43; "What the Kingdom of Heaven Is Like," Matt. 13.44-58; "The Kingdom of Heaven on Earth," "The Child and the Kingdom," Matt. 15. 1-14; "Our All for the Kingdom," Matt. 19. 16-30; "Promotion in the Kingdom," Matt. 20. 17-28; and "Jesus Greeted as King," Matt. 21. 1-46.

"Some Social Teachings of the Bible" constitute a three-months' course during the second quarter of 1921. The treatment is suggestive, and, of course, makes no attempt to be exhaustive. The principal themes are: "The Christian Living with Others," "Bible Teachings About Health," "Bible Teachings About Work," "Poverty and Wealth," "Bible Teachings About Education," "Rest and Recreation," "What a Christian Home Should Be," "Making the Neighborhood Christian," "Making the Nation Christian," "Making the World Christian," "Making the Social Order Christian," and "The Social Task of the Church."

"Jesus the World Saviour" is the title of a six-months' course based upon the Gospel of Luke beginning with October, 1922,

and extending through the first quarter of the year, 1923, with such lesson titles as the following: "Jesus the Great Physician," "Jesus the Great Teacher," "Jesus the Friend of Sinners," and "Jesus the Great Missionary."

The last half of the year 1923 has two interesting courses, namely, "Great Men and Women of the Bible" and "The Missionary Message of the Bible." The studies in biblical biography are chosen on a chronological basis and include Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Ruth, Samuel, David, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Nehemiah, Esther, John the Baptist, Mary the Mother of Jesus, Simon Peter, John the Apostle, Matthew, Mary Magdalene, Martha and Mary, Stephen, Barnabas, Paul, John Mark, Luke and Timothy. The last quarter of 1923 is given over to the missionary message of the Bible, which includes "Israel as a Missionary Nation," "Some Missionary Teachings of the Prophets," "Some Missionary Teachings of the Psalms," "Jesus a Missionary," "Christians Called to be Missionaries," "The Missionary Impulse of the Early Church," "World-Wide Missions," and finally, "The Universal Reign of Christ."

Considering the Cycle as a whole,⁹ several facts are apparent.

In the first six years of the Cycle, for example, the gospel story is studied three times, together with a rather detailed study of the historical events of the Old Testament. In addition to these, there are the four topical courses and the course on biblical biography. The emphasis very clearly has been placed on the New Testament, though not to the neglect of the Hebrew Scriptures. The committee expressed itself as favoring the Christian Scriptures, since the lessons have been selected for Christian churches, but they have never been unmindful of the Old Testament as containing great lessons of righteousness, and of its ability to throw light on the New.¹⁰ It seemed fitting to the International Lesson Committee that the two last years of the Cycle should contain a comprehensive review of the Old Testament history and a more detailed study of the life of Jesus,

⁹ See Appendix for complete list of lessons by years.

¹⁰ *The International Sunday School Lessons*, 1924. Prepared by the International Lesson Committee.

followed by a study of the spread of Christianity as portrayed by the Acts and by the Epistles.¹¹

In making suggestions to the publishing houses using the lessons, the committee adopted for the individual lessons the following order:

Date—Lesson Title	Reference Material
Lesson Text—Print	Primary Topic
	Lesson Material
Golden Text	Memory Verse
Devotional Reading, designed for the opening worship of the school	Junior Topic
	Lesson Material
	Memory Verse
	Intermediate Topic
	Additional Material
	Senior and Adult Topic
	Additional Material ¹²

The *Improved Uniform Lessons* represent at least the following changes or improvement over the lessons of the preceding forty-five years.

1. It is the only eight-year Cycle. The eight-year plan was adopted by the Lesson Committee, so that it might present several short topical courses: for example, *Some Great Teachings of the Bible*, and *Studies in the Lives of Peter and John*, which occupied the second, third, and fourth quarters of the year 1919. The short topical courses were planned in addition to the usual chronological study of the whole Bible. The committee felt it desirable to present a more frequent survey of the entire Bible with varying methods of approach than the six-year Cycle would allow.¹³ Furthermore, the new arrangement harmonized the period of the Cycle with newly adopted quadrennial conventions of the International Sunday School Association.¹⁴

2. It is the only Cycle that breaks the chronological order of biblical treatment for the topical selections, such as "Social Teachings of the Bible" (1921). Besides breaking the chrono-

¹¹ *The International Sunday School Lessons*, 1924. Prepared by the International Lesson Committee.

¹² *Ibid.*, 1919.

¹³ *The Improved Uniform Course for 1919*, prepared by the International Sunday School Lesson Committee, issued January 19, 1917.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 1917.

logical order, the topical courses aim to provide surveys of the important biblical truths, making possible discussions, based particularly on the Bible text,¹⁵ of the outstanding aspects of the Christian religion.

3. It affords greater variety of study in that it provides for biographical, social, and didactic studies from the Bible, as well as for the historical and narrative.

4. The basic lesson texts contain more Scripture verses than those of former Cycles, thus providing a broader biblical foundation for the lesson studied. For example, the lesson for August 13, 1922, is entitled "Esther Saves Her People," the lesson text for that Sunday being the entire book of Esther.

5. The Cycle is more in keeping with modern psychology in that it has attempted, in part at least, to begin with the life situation and use the biblical material as illustrative. For example, a young convert might well ask, "What constitutes the Christian life?" One section of the lessons for 1918 addresses itself to this practical question.

6. The lesson is uniform for all ages above the beginners,¹⁶ but the committee suggests separate lesson titles for each age group. An example will make this clear. The second quarter for the year 1919 begins with "God Our Heavenly Father."

Primary Topic: The Heavenly Father's Care of His Children.

Junior Topic: God Our Creator and Keeper.

Intermediate Topic: What Do We Owe to Our Father in Heaven?

Senior and Adult Topic: God the Father Almighty.¹⁷

Not only have different topics been assigned to the different age groups, but more appropriate memory verses and Scripture selections have also been provided. Using the same lesson again as illustrative, this point is made clear.

¹⁵ *The Improved Uniform Lessons for 1920*, issued by the International Sunday School Lesson Committee.

¹⁶ Beginning with 1924, the Lesson Committee no longer issues adaptations under the Intermediate Department, since their needs are being served by "Group-Graded Lessons."

¹⁷ *The International Sunday School Lessons, Improved Uniform Series, course for 1919*. Prepared by the International Sunday School Lesson Committee.

Primary Topic:	The Heavenly Father's Care of His Children.
Lesson Material:	Gen. 1: 1, 27; Matt. 6: 24, 34.
Memory Verse:	He careth for you. 1 Peter 5: 7.
Junior Topic:	God Our Creator and Keeper.
Memory Verses:	Genesis 1: 1, 27.
Intermediate Topic:	What We Owe to Our Father in Heaven.
Senior and Adult Topic:	God the Father Almighty.
Additional Material:	Job 38; Psalm 33; Ephes. 1: 1, 14.

A brief survey of the Cycle by years discloses the fact that the lessons covered the Old Testament in considerable detail, the story contained in the Gospels, three times, five courses of a topical nature and one biographical course covering the entire Bible. The emphasis is clearly upon the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles but the Old Testament has been utilized in its essential teachings, and as background for the New. The two closing years of the Cycle present a summary of the Bible, containing a brief outline of Old Testament History, the life of Jesus, the spread of Christianity, and studies in Acts and the Epistles.¹⁸

Let us next consider the relative distribution of biblical material in the Uniform Lessons throughout the entire period covered by these lessons. This distribution is set forth in tables which cover the entire period of the Uniform Lesson from 1873 to 1925. The tables are given in the Appendix, pages 322-340, and only summaries and conclusions are presented here.

A calculation of the number of lessons in the *International Lessons* which were selected from the several books of the Bible (1872-1925) may be thus summarized:

Total number of lessons from the Old Testament,	1,078
Total number of lessons from the New Testament,	1,575
Total number of lessons,	2,653
Percentage of lessons from the Old Testament,	40.6
Percentage of lessons from the New Testament,	59.4

During the period of fifty-two years there were eighty-one lessons, the verses of which were chosen from one or more books of the Bible. Therefore, a calculation which shows only the selection of lessons would not give complete information with

¹⁸ *The International Sunday School Lessons, Improved Uniform Series, course for 1925.* Prepared by the International Sunday School Lesson Committee.

reference to the use of the Scriptures in the *International Lessons*. The number of verses selected from the various books of the Bible (1873-1925) may be set forth in this fashion:

Total for Old Testament,	17,557
Total for New Testament,	14,241
Total for Bible,	31,798
Per cent of verses from Old Testament,	55.2
Per cent of verses from New Testament,	44.8

The number of lessons contained in the *Improved Uniform Lessons* (1918-1925) selected from the various books of the Bible is:

Total for Old Testament,	105
Total for New Testament,	202
Total number of lessons,	307
Percentage of lessons from Old Testament,	34.2
Percentage of lessons from New Testament,	65.8

This summary includes all lessons the verses of which are selected from one given book of the Bible. Since there were lessons chosen from two or more books of Scripture, Tables XI-XII have been prepared to show the distribution on the basis of verses over the Bible. The result is:

Total for Old Testament,	12,806
Total for New Testament,	8,993
<hr/>	
Total number of verses,	21,799
Percentage of verses from Old Testament,	59.22
Percentage of verses from New Testament,	40.78

One notices the fact that in the *Improved Uniform Lessons* more lessons were chosen from the New Testament while there are more verses from the Old. This is to be accounted by the fact that in many cases more verses were assigned to lessons from the Old Testament.

The tables to be found in the Appendix, pages 332-340, show the following facts. Table I indicates that—

1. In fifty-two years there were no lessons selected from eight books of the Bible (Song of Solomon, Lamentations, Obadiah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, 2 John, 3 John and Jude) and only one lesson from each of five books (Joel, Nahum, 2 Thessalonians,

Philemon and 2 Peter). This means that 12.1 per cent of the books of the Bible are untouched as far as lesson material is concerned, and 7.6 per cent of the books are represented by only five lessons. Taken together, this means that 19.7 per cent of the Bible was unused except for the selection of only five lessons.

2. It may be deduced from Table I that 1,036 of the 2,653 lessons, or 44.02 per cent, were selected from the Gospels. This means that nearly one half the period was devoted to these books.

3. Of the total number of lessons, 18.8 per cent more were selected from the New Testament than from the Old Testament. On the basis of years this means that approximately nine and one half years' more time was devoted to the New Testament than to the Old.

4. In the last Cycle one hundred and twenty-three, or 60.8 per cent, of the lessons from the New Testament, were chosen from the Gospels.¹⁹

5. Table II indicates that, of all the books of the Bible, The Acts of the Apostles is the favorite one for lesson selection, since twenty-eight more lessons have been selected from this book than from any other book of the Bible. If the Gospels, however, could be thought of as one book they would rank first with 1,036 lessons.²⁰

6. Table III indicates that of the books of the Old Testament Genesis ranks first in the number of lessons chosen from it, while a great prophet like Isaiah ranks sixth, and the story of Ruth ranks 22.5. It is evident from this Table that five books of the Old Testament have never been utilized for the purpose of lesson material.

7. Table V also indicates that there are seven books of the Bible from which no verses have been selected (Song of Solomon, Lamentations, Obadiah, Habakkuk, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, and Jude).

8. Table VI indicates that the Acts of the Apostles ranks first in verses chosen as well as in lessons, according to Table II.

¹⁹ Computed from Table IX, Appendix, p. 338.

²⁰ Table II, Appendix, p. 333.

9. In the last Cycle of lessons known as the *Improved Uniform Lessons* there were twenty-seven books from which no entire lesson was chosen and ten others which furnished only one lesson each (Table IX). Table XI indicates that there were eighteen books from which no verses were selected. The emphasis during the last Cycle was placed upon Genesis, the Acts, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, 1 Samuel, and Exodus, which contained 71.6 per cent of all the lessons,²¹ the verses of which were chosen from one book only.

10. From Table V it may be deduced that on the basis of verses selected, 10.4 per cent more were chosen from the Old Testament than the New. This is to be explained by the fact of the greater length of the lesson selections from the Old Testament in such instances as when the entire books of Esther and Ruth are assigned, or the entire story of Joseph in Genesis is listed as the lesson selection.

11. Table VI also indicates that more verses were selected from Genesis and from 1 Samuel than from either Matthew, or Mark, or John. With Table II in mind, which indicates that more lessons were chosen in each of the first three Gospels than in either Genesis or 1 Samuel, there might be a question as to why this is so. The fact is that the longer verse assignments in Genesis and 1 Samuel account for it.

Considering the entire series 1873-1925 as a unit, and the Cycle 1918-1925 as a unit within the larger one, there are some deductions that ought to be made on the basis of the tables:

(1) Both emphasize Genesis, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and the Acts as the basis of greatest lesson selection (Tables II and X).

(2) Both spend the major emphasis on the Gospels.

(3) A study of Tables V and XI, with the difference in the length of time of both units in mind, one can easily conclude that verses selected for the *Improved Uniform Lessons* were much greater in number than in the former unit.

²¹ Computed from Table XI, Appendix, page 340.

CHAPTER XII

AIMS, METHODS, AND RESULTS OF THE
INTERNATIONAL LESSONS

AIMS OF THE INTERNATIONAL LESSONS

THE aims of the Uniform Lessons may be made clear by a consideration of the written statements of the promoters of these lessons and an examination of the lesson content. It may be said that the chief purpose of the *International Lessons* was to get children and youth converted to God and to have an understanding of his Word, the Bible. Mr. J. F. Chaffee declared in 1868 that the conversion of childhood and youth was the supreme object of the Sunday-school teacher.¹ F. T. Brown, in the *National Sunday School Teacher* of 1869, writes, "This, then, is the work immediately before every Sunday-school teacher, to teach and labor, and pray for the conversion of the children."² William Palmer expresses the same idea when he calls the attention of the teacher to the fact that his task is to bring every soul under his care to Christ.³

There is plenty of evidence to show that another objective of the Sunday school was to aid the pupils in acquiring a knowledge of the Scriptures. The *Eclectic Library* (a series of lesson helps) contained a statement in the volume for 1872 to the effect that the church builds her hopes upon the diligent and devout study of God's Word.⁴ The same idea is expressed by F. N. Peloubet, in 1914, when he writes, "One of the most important things a teacher can do for his scholars is so to teach the Bible that it will interpret to the child his own daily life."⁵ The preface of *Illustrative Notes*, by Jesse L. Hurlbut and Robert R. Doherty, con-

¹ *National Sunday School Teacher*, 1868, p. 101.

² *Ibid.*, 1869, p. 259.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 259.

⁴ *Eclectic Library*, 1872, preface.

⁵ Peloubet, F. N., *Select Notes on the International Sunday School Lessons*, 1914, preface.

tains this statement: "The purpose of the Sunday school is to teach the Word of God to young and old."⁶ These statements by writers in Sunday-school and religious periodicals are representative of many similar views during the last quarter of the nineteenth century.⁷

The very fact that the Uniform Lessons are wholly biblical is evidence of the stress placed upon biblical material. The lesson helps prepared for the Uniform Lessons are largely expository, didactic, and material-centered. Ever since the inauguration of the Uniform Lessons the teacher's task has been to get the pupil acquainted with the biblical material. Little attention has been given to relating the lessons to the pupil's daily needs and problems. However, the Uniform Lessons marked an advance over the Sunday-school materials of former periods.

THE TREATMENT OF LESSON CONTENT

When the *International Lessons* took possession of the field and the various denominations and private lesson writers began to publish helps, a change became evident in the method of teaching. The older, unassigned memory method was abandoned and a newer and better approach was provided. The new type of lesson helps contained expositions, explanations, and illustrations which provided a stimulus for the imagination and an outlet for the emotions. The former mechanical methods of teaching were easily abandoned. The aim of the new helps accompanying the Uniform Lessons was not to burden the memory but to direct the pupil to the deeper meaning of the Scripture passages through explanation and exposition.

It does not lie within the scope of this study to examine the multitude of teaching helps prepared by the various denominations throughout the period of the Uniform Lessons. However, it is possible and practicable to note a few of the typical independent publications. Those lessons chosen here for examination are typical of the kind of lessons issued by the denominations throughout the period. Therefore, a study of two or three

⁶ Hurlbut, Jesse L. and Doherty, Robert R., *Illustrative Notes*, 1890, preface.

⁷ Personal examination by the writer.

of the representative lesson helps will give an idea of the method employed all along.⁸

The Eclectic Library. In 1872 appeared a system of lesson helps in the form of a comprehensive commentary known as the *Eclectic Library*. In the introduction of Volume I is found the following statement as to its policy: "It contains the best thoughts of threescore of the ablest theological writers on both sides of the Atlantic. These comments are devotional, argumentative, philosophical, and scientific; embracing notes on the most recent discoveries of geography, history, and general exploration in the Bible lands."⁹ The *Eclectic Library* continued for seven years (1872-1879) and the plan is strikingly similar to all of the volumes and to all of the lessons within each volume. Therefore, to give an idea of the entire series, the skeleton plan of a typical lesson is cited here:

THIRD QUARTER. LESSON VII. 1872¹⁰
Accountability to God. Rev. XIV, 7-13

7. *None . . . liveth to himself.* The end of a man's existence is not personal, ought not to be personal, cannot be personal (Lyth). A Christian living to himself is a contradiction in terms. The believer's true life is one of self-renunciation and love (Robinson, W.). However self-sufficient in our judgment, we are not independent beings. We are fastened by strong ties to the throne of God. By creation, by redemption, by self-consecration we are Christ's and God's (Whedon). *No man dieth to himself*—Christians may transgress by being unwilling to die, and they may also transgress in wishing to die. They ought to be willing to live or die, as it is for God's glory. . . . Every Christian when he dies, dies to the glory of God. This accords with what is said with respect to Peter, "by what death he was to glorify God" (Haldane).

8. *Live . . . die unto the Lord.* Nothing but the most vivid explanation of these remarkable words could make them endurable to any Christian ear if Christ were a mere creature, for Christ—in the most emphatic terms and yet in the most unimpassioned tone—is here held up as the supreme object of the Christian's life, and of his death too; and that by the man whose horror of creature-worship was such that when the poor Lycaonians would have worshiped him, he rushed forth to arrest the deed, directing them to the "living God" as the only legitimate object of worship. Acts XIV, 15 (J. F. B.).

9. *Lord of the dead and the living.* Separate, as well as embodied spirits are under his authority, and he it is who is to raise even the dead to life: and thus all, throughout eternity, shall live under his domain (Clarke, A.). . .

⁸ Series chosen are: *Eclectic Library*, *Lesson Commentary* and *Select Notes on the International Sunday School Lessons*.

⁹ *Eclectic Library*, preface, vol. I, 1872.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 69 and 70, 1872.

The verse-by-verse exposition as quoted above is typical of the treatment of all the verses of the lesson and such expositions are the only helps for teachers and pupils. It is purely a matter of exposition and is mostly a series of quotations from authorities. There are no adaptations to the various age groups or capacities. The expositions are theological. This lesson, typical of the whole *Eclectic Series* for pupils and teachers, shows clearly that the method was formal, theological, and material-centered.

In 1880 the *Eclectic Library* was changed to the *Lesson Commentary*,¹¹ under which name it was published for eleven years. In the preface it is stated that the purpose of the *Lesson Commentary* is to glean from all sources the best thought of the best commentaries and preachers of Christendom upon the lessons of the *International Series*. The plan adopted by the *Lesson Commentary* was so consistently followed that only one lesson will be selected as typical of all.

*Matt. 6. 1-13, Lesson VIII. First Quarter*¹²

A. D. 27)

LESSON VIII

(Feb. 22.

Giving and Praying, Matt. 6. 1-13

Time: A. D. 27, in the second year of Christ's ministry.

Place: A mountain, perhaps Tell-Hattin, seven miles southwest of Capernaum.

Persons: Jesus, addressing the newly chosen apostles, the general company of disciples, and the multitude.

Parallel Passages: The Lord's Prayer is given also in Luke 11. 2-4.

Connecting Links: See Lesson V.

Introduction: Having shown the internal principle of the Christian character, the Saviour now proceeds to exhibit its outward manifestations in action. In the first verse the general idea of righteousness in conduct (incorrectly translated "alms") is presented. Then two of its most important divisions are named, almsgiving and prayer. The principles which should guide us in both are laid down, and a model prayer is given us to use, and also to copy in its characteristics.

Exposition: Verse 1. *Alms.* Translate *righteousness*, not benevolence or alms, for this meaning is never found in the New Testament. *Before men, to be seen.* For a man may do his good deeds before men, but not in order to be seen by them; and a man may do them not before men, but in order to be seen by them (Chrysostom). . . . [Thus goes the exposition through all the verses].

¹¹ Vincent, John H., and Hurlbut, J. L., *Lesson Commentary*, 1880.

¹² *Lesson Commentary*, 1880, pp. 56-61.

Authorities to be Consulted:

Pulpit Analyst, I, 455.

Preacher's Lantern, IV, 122.

Farrar, I, 262; Geikie, II, 80;

Bible Educator (various references).

Wesley's Works, Vol. V, 328; Land and Book, Vol. I, 28.

Root Thoughts:

Alms and prayers go together. They are normal developments of a true religious life. They may exist outwardly, separated from the inward life, as paper flowers on a Christmas tree. . . .

Practical Thoughts:

1. Every man looks for some reward, either from earth or from heaven.
2. That which is done for the praise of men cannot obtain the praise of God. Verse 2.
3. God's eye penetrates the secret heart, and God's voice will proclaim the secret deed to the ends of the universe. Verse 4.
4. Not the language or the length but the spirit of a prayer gives it power with God. Verse 7.

It is evident to one who makes an examination of the *Lesson Commentary* that the plan was but slightly varied throughout the series. It was truly an exposition and commentary with a minimum of practical lessons. Near the close of the series there is a recognition to a slight degree of the educational task of the teacher. A limited attempt is made to assist him. No suggestions are made for the self-activity of the child.

Peloubet's Notes. After having considered two series of helps characteristic of the early period of the Uniform Lessons, it now seems advisable to examine one series that has been continuous throughout so as to record the entire development—*Select Notes on the International Sunday School Lessons*, by F. N. Peloubet.

The preface of Peloubet's *Select Notes* for 1875 contains this description:

There is no attempt at originality in this volume. It consists almost entirely of selections from different commentaries and other sources. The advantages sought are:

1. Notes explanatory, illustrative, and practical on each lesson of the year.
2. These notes are from a wide range of the best authors.
3. They are confined to the lesson.
4. They are non-sectarian.
5. Parallel passages are given to the references.
6. Maps of Palestine, as it was in the early settlement, and also as it was in the time of Christ.
7. A chronological table including contemporary history.

8. A table of the significance and pronunciation of all the proper names referred to in the lessons.
9. Sabbath school concert exercises, with blackboard exercises for each quarter.

An examination of the lessons finds them to be very simple in treatment, including only the Scripture text followed by exposition verse by verse. A sample lesson typical of the entire book for 1875 is noted here:

LESSON X, MARCH 7, 1875

The Cities of Refuge. Joshua 20: 1-9

(B. C. 1444)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Lord also spoke unto Joshua saying, 2. Speak to the children of Is- | <p>rael saying, appoint out for you cities of refuge, whereof I spake unto you by the hand of Moses.</p> |
|---|--|

Parallel Passages. Exodus 21: 13, Numbers 35: 6, 11, 14. Deut. 19: 2, 9. Deut. 33: 27, 2nd Samuel 22: 3, Ps. 9: 9, Ps. 46: 1, Ps. 57: 1, Rom. 8: 1.

Lesson Exposition

Verse 2. Appoint out for you cities of refuge (B. F. T.). Blood revenge, or revenge by bloodshed, was regarded among the Jews, as among all the ancient and Asiatic nations, not only as a right, but even as a duty, which devolved upon the nearest relative of the murdered person, who on this account was called goel hadam, the reclamer of blood, or one who demands restitution of blood. The Mosaic law expressly forbids the acceptance of a ransom for the forfeited life of the murderer, although it might be saved by his seeking an asylum at the altar of the tabernacle, in case the homicide was accidentally committed (Exod. 21: 13, 1 Kings 1: 50; 2: 28).

This treatment is strikingly like the *Eclectic Library* of 1872 which we have already noted. The *Select Notes* by Peloubet show variation by 1879. Here instead of being just an exposition of the verses as in 1875 there is an enrichment in the lesson treatment. A lesson skeleton will make this clear:

LESSON IX, JUNE 1, 1879

The Prophecy Against Tyre, Ezekiel 26: 7-14

Time of Ezekiel. Ezekiel's prophecy extends over at least 22 years B. C. 595-573. "The captivity of Jehoiachin" was his epoch.—Cook.

Date of the lesson. B. C. 589-8 in the spring; eleven years (26: 1) after the beginning of the 70 years captivity, when Ezekiel was carried captive to Babylon, and within a year of the destruction of Jerusalem.

Place. In Chaldea, by the river Chebar (Ezekiel 1: 1), near Babylon.

Place in Bible History. 2nd Kings, Chs. 23-25, 2 Chron. Chs. 35, 36, Jeremiah and Daniel 1-5.

Rulers. Zedekiah, the last king of Judah; Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; Pharaoh Hophra, king of Egypt, Ethbaale, king of Tyre.

Contemporary Prophets. Jeremiah in Judah, Daniel in Chaldea, Obadiah.

Contemporary History. "The Seven Wise Men" flourished in Greece. Tarquinius Priscus ruled at Rome. Solon the wise lawgiver at Athens; Sappho, the Greek Poetess; Æsop, noted for his fables; and the philosopher Pythagoras all lived during Ezekiel's lifetime.

Ezekiel. A description of his life and work.

Book of Ezekiel. An analysis of the book.

Introduction. The background of history which gave the relation with Tyre and why Tyre rejoiced at the destruction of Jerusalem.

Explanatory. The treatment here is that of explanation by verses all through the lesson text.

Illustration. In this section there were a number of illustrations bearing on the lesson.

Practical.

1. "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."
2. God uses wicked men as the instruments by which he punishes other wicked men.
3. God's threatenings against sinners will prove true to the letter.
4. Therefore we may know that his promises too will be fulfilled to the letter.

Thus we note that considerable improvement was made in the first five-year period by the addition of such features as time, date, place, contemporary prophets, history, introduction, illustrations, and practical lessons. When we compare Peloubet's *Select Notes* for 1879 with the *Lesson Commentary* for 1880 we find a striking likeness in lesson treatment. It is very evident that the method was material-centered.

After a period of five years Peloubet's *Select Notes* show two improvements: (1) The accompaniment of library references and (2) suggestions to teachers. For an example of the latter, Lesson II, January 13, 1884, entitled "Hearing and Doing," James 1.16-27, is typical. The suggestion to teachers is stated thus:

After showing why we change our lessons from the Acts to the Epistle of James, and drawing from the scholars some account of James and his Epistles, we may take as our subject, the nature of true religion, (1) Its source (verses 16-18), from God the author of every good and perfect gift . . . (2) Some of its duties and dangers (verses 19-25); (3) Characteristics of true religion (verses 26-27); (a) Self-government and control, (b) Service of love toward men, (c) Purity from the worldly spirit.

Five years later (1889) the lessons show no material change in treatment. Another five years (1894), and there is no change

except that one finds more practical suggestions and more illustrations. Five years later (1899) the only change noted is that the suggestions to the teachers are now placed at the beginning of the lesson instead of at the close. Take, for example, Lesson X, March 5, 1899, *Christ Freeing From Sin* (John 8.12, 31-36). The teacher is directed to review the previous chapters by use of the most typical incidents recorded in each. The specific instructions for this lesson are as follows:

The first eleven verses of this chapter are placed by the revisers in brackets, because they are omitted in most of the ancient authorities. Nevertheless, it is a very touching and instructive story and can in part be used to illustrate the latter part of the lesson. Jesus went to the Mount of Olives for the night, probably to his friends in Bethany, and the next morning came again to the temple, and taught the people, winning many disciples (v. 30).

It will be well to dwell but lightly on verse 12, because it is really the subject of our next lesson; but verses 31 and 32 are twin stars around which the whole chapter circles. They are forces to which all the other verses point, the center which condenses in one bright star, the Golden Star dust of the whole chapter.

The directions to teachers are concerned exclusively with the biblical material and not at all with the life situations of the pupils. Possibly the two greatest improvements in the helps by Peloubet between 1879 and 1899 were: (1) The wealth of illustrative material, and (2) the increased number of suggestions to teachers.

Five years later (1904) there are two improvements in method: (1) Topics for home study and class discussion, and (2) the "lesson in literature." To make these points clear let us examine a typical lesson. The lesson for May 1, 1904, is entitled, "Prayer." The topics for home study and class discussions are:

Compare the Lord's Prayer as given here and in Matthew. Compare verse 13 with Matthew 7: 11, note the difference, and give a reason for it.

Is prayer always answered?

Relation of faith to prayer.

The lesson in literature is a new feature of the helps. The suggestions for this lesson are, Tennyson's "Idylls of the King," "The Passing of Arthur," "More Things are Wrought by Prayer," Whittier's "The Prayer-Seeker," Trench's "The Suppliant,"

Longfellow's "Sandolphon." Attention is called to these illustrations in literature, but special directions regarding their use are lacking. The two improvements represent a happy departure and are a worthwhile addition to the former plan.

The *Select Notes* for 1909 mark no substantial change in plan. The same can be said of the lesson plans for 1914 except for a more obvious attempt to relate the lessons to the present-day needs of the pupils. "Lessons in Art" are also included. To make these two points clear let us take two pertinent illustrations:

The lesson for January 18, 1914,¹³ concerned with the good Samaritan, makes a distinct attempt to apply the truth to modern life. The teacher is to point out that the Christian has an opportunity to save and serve the weak. Numerous illustrations are cited of men actually giving their lives for the oppressed. The student is directed to recall Hood's poem, "The Lady's Dream," in which the chief character first lived like a priest and Levite and later became a good Samaritan. A further application of this spirit is made in the statement that the great nations should be the helpers of the smaller ones, and that stronger races should be the helpers of the weaker ones.

The "Lessons in Art" really began two years previous to 1914. One section of the lesson treatment indicated the pictures or works on art that bore upon the lessons. Let us examine an entire section which illustrates this feature. The lesson for February 11, 1912, is entitled "Jesus in the Temple." The section called the "Lesson in Art" has these citations: "Henry van Dyke's *Christ Child in Art*; Farrar's *Life of Christ in Art*; *The Christ Face in Art*, by J. Burns; and E. M. Hurl's *Life of Our Lord in Art*." The illustrations are merely listed and no directions are given as to how they should be used.

The lessons for 1919 show no substantial change or improvement in method of lesson treatment except that the devotional reading is listed for each lesson, and additional material from the Bible bearing on the lesson is listed for the aid of the teacher. Furthermore, the topics, memory verses, and lesson material

¹³ Peloubet, F. N., *Select Notes on the International Sunday School Lessons*, Lesson III, p. 38, 1914.

for Primary, Junior, Intermediate, Senior and Adult groups are listed as released by the International Lesson Committee for the *Improved Uniform Lessons*. Even in the lesson plans for 1924 the sections bearing on exposition and illustration are the ones most definitely stressed.

The *Select Notes on the International Sunday School Lessons* are in attractive book form and have the advantage of permanency. There have been development and improvement as noted. Examination of the entire series leaves one with the very definite conclusion that the primary aim is to get a given amount of material covered. This does not imply that lessons are not drawn, applications are not made, and discussions not carried on, but it does mean that the method used in the lesson helps is biblio-centered and not pupil-centered. The Uniform Lessons are based on the Bible and the lesson plans are chiefly concerned in getting it explained, understood, and taught. Exposition plays the major part. When the pupil knows the meaning of the Word he is expected to make the application in his own life and in the society of which he is a part. All through the helps on the Uniform Lessons the method is not to begin with the life situation of the pupil and then use the biblical material as illustrative, but the reverse.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL LESSONS

1. These lessons called attention to the Bible, which is rightly regarded as a treasure house of literature and religious experience. The Uniform Series provided for a study of the Books even though the method desired is open to criticism. Regardless of the emphasis upon exposition, this series marks a decided advance over the "catechetical method" of the "question-book" age, in which pupils depended almost wholly on the memory.

2. The series is to be commended for the large place which it gives to the life and teachings of Jesus. We have noted on page 250 that 44.02 per cent of all the lessons were selected from the Gospels, which means, roughly speaking, that nearly one half the time during the fifty-two years was devoted to this section of the Bible. This allowed a systematic study and a coherent

understanding of the Gospels far superior to the study which was devoted to the other sections of the Bible.

3. The Uniform Lessons mark an increased denominational co-operation in the Sunday-school field. From about 1835 until 1870 considerable competition existed in the Sunday-school field between the various denominations, each of which attempted to produce a curriculum suited to its own denominational needs. Each Sunday school was practically a law unto itself, and certainly this would hold true in respect to the denominations. With the advent of the Uniform Lessons there came a feeling of sympathy and unity of purpose not known before. Mr. Cope, writing on this point, says: "As a result in the social process, the denominations did co-operate on the bringing of Sunday-school lessons within the reach of children."¹⁴ Mr. J. L. Hurlbut, speaking in the International Sunday School Convention of 1893, expresses his belief that the *International Lessons* have made for Sunday-school unity.¹⁵

4. The lesson helps called forth by the Uniform Lessons constitute a considerable literature on the Bible and from the standpoint of exposition and illustration they are commendable. The *Eclectic Library* for 1879 says, "There has been created a new literature bearing upon biblical exegesis, adaptation, and application."¹⁶

The denominations using the Uniform Lessons had full privilege throughout the entire period of adapting the lessons in any way they saw fit. Each denomination, therefore, provided its own staff of expositors and lesson writers. This called forth a large amount of material explaining, illustrating, and applying selected portions of the Bible. The *Lesson Commentary*, which superseded the *Eclectic Library*, says in its preface for the year 1880, "The purpose of the *Lesson Commentary* is to glean from all sources the best thoughts of the best commentaries and preachers of Christendom upon the lessons of the International Series for the new seven years." Exactly ten years later the

¹⁴ Cope, H. F., *The Evolution of the Sunday School*, p. 107, 1911. Used by permission of the Pilgrim Press.

¹⁵ Hurlbut, J. L., *The Official Report of the International Sunday School Convention*, 1893.

¹⁶ *Eclectic Library*, preface, 1879.

Illustrative Notes, edited by Hurlbut and Doherty, include this note in the preface: "The adoption of the Uniform Lessons was a great step toward Christian unity and for efficiency and thoroughness in the study of the Bible. More eyes than ever before have been turned upon the sacred page; more Bibles have been circulated; more and better expositions have been prepared and published, and even the Bible itself has been investigated as never before to throw its light upon the interpretation of Scripture."¹⁷

5. It is fair to say, that indirectly the Uniform Lessons helped to pave the way for graded instruction. There grew up a consciousness that the Sunday school was a teaching institution. When this institution determined to teach the Bible, the concept became more definite that here was a teaching institution, capable of growth. Finally, the ideal emerged that the Sunday school through the teaching which it imparted and the influence which it exerted should guide and direct the whole life of the child, and train him for intelligent participation both in youth and mature life and in all the activities of the church. It was only a question of time until the Sunday school would come to accept in the light of modern educational psychology the principles of graded lessons and graded instruction. Certainly, insofar as the Uniform Lessons helped the Sunday school to realize its teaching task, they made their own contribution toward the present graded system with its greater wealth of material and better adaptations.

THE WEAKNESSES OF THE INTERNATIONAL LESSONS

The defects of the Uniform Lessons are many. Some of the makers of the series recognize this fact, and do not claim perfection for their system. We shall now consider the weaknesses of the series.

1. The child is not placed at the center. The lessons do not begin with his religious experience and attempt to help him meet

¹⁷ Hurlbut, J. L., and Doherty, Robert H., *Illustrative Notes, A Guide to the Study of the Sunday School Lessons*, preface, 1890. *The Official Report of the International Sunday School Convention of 1884*, on page 49, expressed it thus: "The Uniform Lessons have created a literature of their own and have more largely shaped the reading interest of England and America than any other agency within the period of its work."

his life situation. Young children cannot be greatly helped in their religious life by a consideration of a lesson on "Poverty and Wealth," "Joshua Renewing the Covenant," or the "Serpent of Brass." There are many lessons, to be sure, that come nearer the child's experience than these, but such lessons as those listed could be multiplied into a very large number.¹⁸ The lessons are not planned or developed psychologically, but, rather, according to a mechanical scheme of chronological unity, disregarding the psychological approach to the pupils.

2. The Lessons are material-centered. The examination which we have made of the lesson helps in this Chapter leads to the conclusion that the aim was and is to teach biblical material. It is true that the material is intended to assist in the achievement of social ends and to emphasize ethical teachings, but the lessons always work from the material outward to the pupil and never from the pupil to the material.

3. Since the lessons are material-centered, naturally the method of treatment is largely expository and exegetical. The free activity of the pupil has had but little place. The *Improved Uniform Lessons* are based somewhat upon the child's experience, but even so, require considerable adaptation of material. Certainly, the material should not be all biblical.

4. The plan of having all ages study the same lesson—so long followed by lesson courses—needs only to be mentioned to be condemned. It is encouraging to note that since 1918 the Lesson Committee has attempted to provide more suitable material for the younger children.

5. The relative emphasis on material throughout the series is unfortunate. It was the aim of the International Convention which authorized the Uniform Lessons, to provide a thorough and comprehensive study of the Bible as a whole. The Lesson Committee, having adopted a distribution of time on a chronological basis (so much to Old and so much to the New Testament), proceeded to distribute the lessons over the entire Bible. Since the committee was working on the principle of a uniform lesson

¹⁸ Sampey, John Richard, *The International Lesson System*, p. 217. Fleming H. Revell Company, publishers.

for all ages, it proved exceedingly difficult to select Scripture passages which yielded suitable lesson material for all ages and capacities. The comparative failure with which this plan met has called forth several incisive criticisms which we shall now consider.

Henry F. Cope points out that in a period of thirty-three years following the "inception"—as he called it—of the Uniform plan, out of the fifty chapters of Genesis only thirty-one chapters are studied. He further points out that only seventeen psalms were used and only two chapters in 1 Chronicles.¹⁹ Mr. Cope says further: "In the New Testament there were equally striking omissions so that students remained in ignorance of events essential to an understanding of the history involved. . . . The system of Uniform Lessons broke down by its utter disregard of relative values in biblical material. This is suggested in the following comparison drawn from the list of lessons for thirty-three years: There are five lessons on the Beatitudes compared with twenty-one lessons on the tabernacle and its ceremonies; the 'Golden Calf' was used in three lessons, the story of Cain and Abel in four. The beautiful Ruth story was never treated in its entirety but was touched on five times, while there were fourteen lessons from Leviticus and six from Romans XIII. There are forty lessons from the bloody book of Joshua and thirty-one from the book of Isaiah. In thirty-three years there were five lessons from Amos and one each from Joel, Micah, and Nahum. As an attempt to get the best and the most out of the Bible the system could hardly be called a success."²⁰

Large space has been given the Acts of the Apostles, Genesis, 1 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, Joshua, and Chronicles, which means that the narrative sections of the Bible have received much stress, but unfortunately it has often been at the expense of other portions of the Bible, such as the Wisdom, Poetical, and Prophetic sections, as Table II, Appendix, page 333, indicates. The study of the history of Israel and Judah is distorted by an undue emphasis upon the episodes of Elijah and Elisha. Luther A.

¹⁹ Cope, Henry F., *The Evolution of the Sunday School*, p. 109.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 109-110.

Weigle points out that these two characters are given almost one half of the lessons dealing with the history of the two kingdoms.²¹ Further light may be gained on the disproportionate biblical emphasis in the lesson material from a comparison of twenty-eight topics drawn from the entire period of fifty-two years.

<i>Lesson Topic</i>	<i>Number of times studied</i>
Man's First Sin.....	8
Cain and Abel.....	6
Noah and the Flood.....	9
Call and Life of Abraham.....	37
Jacob at Bethel.....	6
Joseph Sold into Egypt.....	7
The Jewish Passover.....	8
Crossing the Red Sea.....	9
Giving the Manna.....	7
The Ten Commandments.....	13
The Golden Calf.....	8
The Tabernacle.....	7
The Brazen Serpent.....	5
Crossing the Jordan.....	9
Cities of Refuge.....	6
Death of Samson.....	4
Ruth.....	9
Israel Desires a King.....	5
Temple built, dedicated and rebuilt.....	13
Elijah Translated.....	9
Whole lessons and parts of lessons chosen from Psalms..	25
The Fiery Furnace.....	8
Belshazzar.....	7
Beatitudes.....	8
Prayer.....	19
Walking on the Sea.....	6
The Love Chapter.....	8
James.....	9 ²²

From these data some comparisons are at once apparent.

(a) Crossing the Red Sea receives as much attention as the book of Ruth.

(b) The Temple is emphasized as much as the Ten Commandments.

²¹ Weigle, Luther A., *Religious Education*, p. 229.

²² Calculation based upon Peloubet's *Select Notes on the Sunday School Lessons*; Sampey, John, *The International Sunday School Lessons*, and the *Improved International Uniform Lessons*. (Copy by the International Lesson Committee.)

(c) The practical book of James, with its emphasis upon acts of obedience, and treatment of our fellows, receives equal attention with each of the following: Crossing the Red Sea, Noah and the Flood, and Crossing the Jordan. The lessons dealing with the translation of Elijah are equal in number with those selected from the book of James.

(d) The Beatitudes, often called the Constitution of the Christian Religion, receive equal emphasis with the Fiery Furnace.

(e) The "Love" chapter of the New Testament, 1 Corinthians 13, is emphasized equally with the Golden Calf.

(f) The "call and life of Abraham" is studied thirty-seven times; which seems out of proportion when one considers that in the same length of time the character of Ruth is studied nine times; the Beatitudes are found in eight lessons, and only twenty-five lessons are taken from the Psalms. The fact is clearly evident that relative values have been but poorly achieved in the *International Lessons*.

6. The Uniform Lessons may also be criticized on the basis of their omissions. Table II, Appendix, page 333, gives evidence of a relatively small number of lessons chosen from the Poetic, Wisdom, and Prophetic literature.²³ Luther A. Weigle, in an analysis of the Uniform Lessons, points out that only one sixth of the books of prophecy and less than one eighth of the Poetic and Wisdom literature have been selected.²⁴ He states further, in commenting on the book of Amos, that out of the ten lessons assigned to this book of prophecy, in reality, only three give Amos his true historical place, or enable the students to understand or grasp his real message.²⁵ In comparison to this small number of lessons from the Poetic, Wisdom, and Prophetic literature of the Bible, a relatively large amount of narrative material has been used. In this connection, Professor Weigle has made the following statement: "Forty-nine lessons were devoted to Joseph; ninety-four to David; thirty-nine to Solomon; fifty-one to Elijah; and forty-seven to Elisha. The lessons on Elijah and

²³ This has reference to such books as the Psalms, Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Proverbs, and the books of Prophecy.

²⁴ Weigle, Luther A., *Religious Education*, June, 1925, p. 228.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 228.

Elisha total almost one half of all the lessons on the history of the Kingdom of Isreal and Judah from the division to the captivity, a proportion which throws quite out of perspective the study of this most important period in the history of the Hebrew people and the development, under the leadership of the great prophets of the Hebrew Religion."²⁶

A study of Tables II, page 333, and IX, page 338, indicates the relatively small number of lessons which have been selected from the Epistles. During the entire period of fifty-two years only 180 lessons, or 11.4 per cent of the lessons chosen from the New Testament, were selected from the Epistles. Professor Weigle points out that on a basis of verses two thirds of this section of the New Testament has not been utilized.²⁷

Table I of this study, page 332, shows that no lessons in the entire period of fifty-two years were chosen from the Song of Solomon, Lamentations, Obadiah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, 2 John, 3 John, and Jude. Table V, page 335, shows that one verse was chosen from Zephaniah as a part of some lesson chosen from more than one book. With the exception of this one verse, eight books of the Bible were entirely neglected.

A recent study made by Dr. Marion O. Hawthorne, of Northwestern University, revealed the fact that in the last two Cycles (1912-1925), 33.2 per cent of the Old Testament was unused as basic material.²⁸ When one takes into consideration that this span of fifteen years would carry a child on through to adulthood, he may have some serious doubt as to whether the Uniform Lessons provide a comprehensive study of the Bible by Cycles. At any rate, it is hard to understand why Psalms 9, 15, 24, 26, 34, 37, 42, 46, 90, 91, 95, 96, 119, 127, 128, and Micah 6. 6-8 were never studied and the New Covenant passages from Jeremiah was studied only once.

The Lesson Committee justifies itself by saying that perhaps it does not care to select lessons from the sections of the Bible which have been left unused because those parts are not suitable

²⁶ Weigle, Luther A., *Religious Education*, June, 1925, p. 229.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 228.

²⁸ Hawthorne, Marion O., *The Place of the Old Testament in the Protestant Curriculum*. An unpublished thesis in the library of Northwestern University, 1925, chap. ii.

for Sunday-school study.²⁹ When one criticizes the Lesson committee for not choosing any lessons from the Song of Solomon, Lamentations, Obadiah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, 2 John, 3 John, and Jude, there is the implication that these are adapted to lesson material. Perhaps we should congratulate the committee for their omissions, but the facts are that the Uniform Lessons have not provided for a thorough and comprehensive study of the Bible, which their founders had in mind for them to do.

7. The Uniform Lessons because they are bound in paper soon wear out and do not seem to the children so worth while as their day-school books.

8. The Uniform Lessons do not approach the Scripture in an historical method. No doubt we should all agree that the main reason for a study of the Bible would be to increase our awareness of God and to deepen further our responsibility to our fellows. Further, a study of the Bible should utilize the well-established results of the historical and critical studies of that book. For example, biblical scholars³⁰ insist that the book of Genesis contains prehistorical folktales, oral traditions, and primitive conceptions of science and the world order, but the Uniform Lessons treat all sections of the book without these distinctions, as though they all were to be accepted as literal fact. This is distinctly unfair to the rising generation which is being introduced to the facts of science and the characteristics of primitive people. This misuse of the Bible stands out especially in the case of Genesis because that book was more often used for lesson selections than any other book of the Old Testament.

Results do not seem to justify the continued use of the Uniform Lessons. The lessons have failed to make possible a mastery of the biblical text for the training of teachers. The representative churches have been forced to substitute other books on the Bible which they feel will give the desired informa-

²⁹ Personal information from the present secretary, Ira M. Price, 1924.

³⁰ See Wade, G. Wodung, *Old Testament History*, Introduction and chap. i. Driver, S. R., *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, Chapter on Genesis. Mitchell, H. G., *The World Before Abraham*, Section on the Pentateuch. Kent, Charles Foster, *Beginnings of Hebrew History*, Conclusion to Chapter I.

tion.³¹ When one thinks of the period 1872-1925 with its emphasis upon revivals, decision days, and evangelistic efforts even with childhood and youth, he must conclude that children have not been committing their lives to the Christ ideal, as the advocates of the system expected. For if the program of religious education had been reasonably successful in leading children and youth to the Christ ideal, the recent almost desperate campaign of many leaders in the various evangelical churches to interest youth in Christianity would have been hardly required. It is very evident that children and youth have not been introduced to a knowledge of the progress of Christianity in the world since New Testament times. Furthermore, the Uniform Lessons were unable to make pupils aware of modern ethical and social problems in a vital way and certainly they have provided no training in the necessary activities of the local church. This is evidence that lessons containing biblical material only, and much of this selected without reference to its adaptation to childhood and youth, do not meet the demands placed upon a modern curriculum of religious education. The Sunday school as a teaching institution, ministering to all phases of the religious life, has been seriously handicapped by so long a commitment to biblical material, to the exclusion of all else, in any place where the Uniform Lessons have been used exclusively.

Conclusions

On the basis of usage, it is fair to conclude that the Uniform Lessons have been very popular in the Sunday-school world.³² In spite of their wide usage, they have been subject to much criticism, to which we shall give attention in the next chapter. Nevertheless, in spite of opposition which has been constantly gathering through the years they held a large place, in fact, a dominant place, in the Sunday-school curriculum, until about 1910.

³¹ For example, the Methodist Episcopal Church has in its course of study for teachers such subjects on the Bible as: *The Worker and His Bible*, Eiselen-Barclay; *The Bible*, Barclay; *How We Got Our Bible*, Patterson Smyth; *The Life of Jesus*, Rall; *The Religion of Israel*, Aschan; *The Prophetic Movement in Israel*, Knudson.

³² Weigle, Luther A., *Religious Education*, p. 227. Professor Weigle at this point does not make an exact statement as to their popularity but, rather, to their widespread usage.

Another point is quite evident. The Uniform Lessons did not and do not constitute a complete curriculum in the modern sense but, rather, a program of study. The aim of studying the entire Bible in Cycles is too general to serve as a comprehensive aim for a well-planned and truly organized curriculum. The several divisions have no specific aims to guide the process of instruction. The individual lessons have no specific aims definitely stated and therefore stand pretty largely to themselves. One is strangely conscious of the lack of a definite and comprehensive aim binding the lessons into units or the unit into a curriculum. There is little or no progress in the lessons except that of accumulated knowledge. A system of study that provides only for an accumulation of knowledge cannot be called a curriculum.

CHAPTER XIII

THE FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF THE GRADED CURRICULUM

THE graded religious curriculum, one of the greatest developments in religious education, had its roots in the achievements of former epochs. Its growth was also greatly aided by the influence of contemporaneous movements in public education.

THE IDEA OF GRADED LESSONS NOT NEW

Graded lesson series in the religious curriculum were not entirely the product of the twentieth century, for very early attempts, usually very crude, were made to grade the religious materials to the needs of the pupils. It may be recalled that certain catechisms furnished lessons for young children, different than those for children of more advanced ages. Throughout the "Catechetical Period" (1780-1815) there was recognition of the fact that the materials of religious instruction needed to be adapted to the capacities of the pupils.

In the question-book era and in the "Babel" period (1825-1872), attempts were made to meet the needs of the various age groups by providing material graded somewhat to suit the age levels of the pupils. The defect of this plan, however, is to be found in the fact that it was thought that the same *type* of material, and the same concepts could be assimilated and understood by all the pupils, if these were stated in simple enough terms for the younger ones. Such procedure can hardly be called grading.

Although the *International Lessons* were for the most part ungraded, the fact must not be overlooked that, although all ages used the same basic material, some attempts were made in the lesson notes supplied by independent publishers and various denominations to provide a kind of adaptation of material to the

needs of the pupils. For example, when the International Lesson Committee issued the Uniform Lessons without note or comment, the American Sunday School Union quickly seized the opportunity and issued lesson helps in three grades for the use of three respective classes, the Advanced, Intermediate, and Primary.¹ The lesson papers prepared for each group consisted of expositions, explanations, illustrations, and applications designed to fit the needs of the different ages. It is evident that this attempt at grading was not directed toward the basic material but, rather, toward the lesson helps. Here again, as in the two former periods of Sunday-school curricula, was a failure on the part of lesson makers to realize the fact that the basic material itself must be selected in the light of its suitability to the child's needs, interests, and capacities. This fundamental principle still unrealized, lesson writers continued their attempts to simplify the material for the younger children. This practice reveals, however, a consciousness that children should be taught in a manner different from adults, a conviction that has borne fruit in the current graded curricula.

DISSATISFACTION WITH THE UNIFORM LESSONS

The Uniform Lessons, being exceedingly popular, were widely used² and held undisputed sway from the time of their introduction until about 1910, but they were never entirely without criticism. When the system was first adopted in the Fifth National Convention at Indianapolis, ten dissenting votes were cast, one of the dissenters being the Rev. Edward Eggleston. He was of the opinion that the proposed system did not provide adaptations needed for the younger ages.³ Even though the opposition within the convention was swept aside by the wave of enthusiasm for uniformity, it was vain to hope that there would be long and continued satisfaction with a series of lessons that so utterly

¹ Rice, Edwin Wilbur, *The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union*, pp. 301-302.

² John R. Sampey says: "When the first sharp attack on the *International Series* was made, about 1890 to 1893, perhaps less than 11,000,000 teachers and pupils were using the Lesson Lists issued by the International Committee. By 1902 the number had increased to more than 15,000,000 and by 1905 a very conservative estimate would put the estimate at 17,000,000." *International Lesson System*, p. 154. Reprinted by permission of Fleming H. Revell Company, publishers.

³ *Official Report of the Eleventh International Sunday School Convention*, Toronto, Canada, 1905, p. 41.

ignored the needs, interests, and capacities of the various age groups.

Even as early as the year 1878 there were four very definite objections to the Uniform Lessons: (1) They were declared to be "scrappy and fragmentary"; (2) there was little or no room for the teaching of the doctrines of the several denominations; (3) not enough prominence was given to temperance, missions, and reform movements; and (4) the lessons were not arranged so as to coincide with the church year.⁴

In 1899 J. Monroe Gibson, speaking before the World's Sunday School Convention in London, summarized the most common objections that were being raised against the *International Lessons*: (1) Some were saying there was no need for Uniform Lessons and that they sacrificed utility for mere sentiment; (2) some were saying there was a complaint against the Uniform Lessons on the ground that they were not systematic; (3) and many were objecting to the lessons from the New Testament Epistles, on the ground that they contained too many abstract doctrines.⁵

Previous to 1890 a growing demand was felt for lessons dealing with temperance and missions. The International Convention of 1890 authorized the Lesson Committee to select a temperance lesson for one Sunday out of each quarter.⁶ It may seem like a far cry from this to the present curriculum, but it shows that back of the demand for lessons dealing with temperance there was a growing recognition that the Sunday school was a teaching institution whose task was larger than the mere imparting of biblical information. In this demand was involved the conviction, fundamentally, that the Sunday school had a responsibility to contribute to the social reform movement of its day. Lying back of or deeply embedded in this dissatisfaction with the exclusively biblical teaching was the feeling that the Sunday school must make provision for the well-rounded life of the child. Viewed in this light one can see how this dissatisfaction would inevitably turn in the direction of a broader curriculum.

⁴ *Official Report of the International Convention, 1878.*

⁵ Gibson, J. Monroe, "The Selection of Lessons," *The World's Sunday School Convention*, pp. 125-129.

⁶ Cope, Henry F., *Evolution of the Sunday School*, p. 116.

Before the opening of the twentieth century there was a growing demand for lessons more suitable to young children than were the Uniform Lessons. As early as 1880 members of the Newark Association of Infant Sunday School Teachers were creating their own lesson material to be used in instructing children just beginning their Sunday-school training.⁷

In 1894 Miss Bertha F. Vella, secretary of the International Primary Union, through a questionnaire secured the views of three hundred primary teachers concerning lesson material.⁸ These were tabulated and submitted to the International Lesson Committee, which met March 14, 1894. On March 13, 1894, the Executive Committee of the International Primary Teachers' Union adopted a resolution recommending to the Lesson Committee that they select a separate International Lesson for the Primary Department.⁹ The Lesson Committee in 1894 acceded to this request, and in 1895 a course was issued under the title *Optional Primary Lessons for 1896*. It was published by the *Sunday School Times* but did not attain wide popularity.¹⁰ The International Primary Union continued its activity of advocating graded lessons for the younger pupils, and in 1897 a group of workers connected with the New Jersey School of Methods issued a two years' course of lessons called *Bible Lessons for Little Beginners*, written by Miss Margaret Cushman (now Mrs. Haven).¹¹ These lessons proved very much more popular than the primary course, optional *Primary Lessons for 1896*, and were adopted by many schools, making even more insistent in the denominations the demand for graded lessons.¹² Continued activity on the part of the International Primary Union caused the International Convention in 1902 to authorize the Lesson Committee to prepare a two-years' course. What they produced constitutes the present material of the Interdenominational Closely Graded Lessons For Beginners.¹³

Dissatisfaction with the Uniform Lessons for younger ages

⁷ Sampcy, John R., *The International Lesson System*, p. 161. Fleming H. Revell Company, publishers.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

¹⁰ *Official Report of the Eleventh International Convention*, p. 82.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 82.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 83, 1905.

spread to the lessons for adults, with the result that the Sunday School Editorial Association (composed of Sunday-school editors and lesson writers) indicated to the Lesson Committee in April, 1901, that it ought to provide lessons other than the *International* for adult classes.¹⁴ The Lesson Committee accordingly drew up a two-year course (one year devoted to the early prophets and one year to the life and letters of Paul), which the International Convention meeting in 1902 failed to authorize.¹⁵ The demand for a graded course for adults did not abate, however, as a result of the refusal of the Denver Convention (1902) to sponsor such a course for advanced students. In view of this growing demand for improvement, the International Convention which met in Toronto in 1905 authorized an optional advanced course which was prepared, accordingly, by the Lesson Committee. In June, 1906, the course appeared with the title *The Ethical Teachings of Jesus*, and in 1908 the Lesson Committee issued two other courses for adults, *The Gospel of John* and *The Rise, Growth and Disruption of the Hebrew Kingdom*.¹⁶

As dissatisfaction with the Uniform Lessons crystallized, one influence was brought to bear upon the International Lesson Committee, which made possible the issuance of optional lessons better suited to the needs and interests of the groups in question.

CHANGED CONCEPTIONS IN RELIGION

The closing years of the nineteenth century mark changes and advances in the study of the Bible and in religion.¹⁷ The scientific method which was gaining such headway in education and psychology began to make itself felt in the field of religion. This spirit was first reflected in a number of books which appeared

¹⁴ Sampsey, John R., *The International Lesson System*, p. 172. Fleming H. Revell Company, publishers.

¹⁵ *Official Report of the Eleventh International Sunday School Convention*, 1905, p. 86.

¹⁶ For more detailed study see the *Official Report of the Twelfth International Convention*, 1908.

¹⁷ Evidence for this statement is at hand in such books as the following: Kent, Charles F., *Student's Old Testament* (Beginnings of Hebrew History), 1904; Driver, S. R., *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, 1899; Abbott, Lyman, *The Life and Literature of the Ancient Hebrews*, 1901; McFadyen, John E., *Old Testament Criticism and the Christian Church*, 1903; McFadyen, John E., *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 1906; Smith, George A., *Modern Criticism and Preaching of the Old Testament*, 1901; Wade, G. Woosung, *Old Testament History*, 1904; Mitchell, S. G., *The World Before Abraham*, 1901; Moore, G. F., *Judges*, 1895; Sandy, William, *Romans*, 1902; Harper, W. R., *Amos and Hosea*, 1905; Briggs, C. A., *Psalms*, 1906; Cooke, R. J., *Christianity and Childhood*, 1891.

around 1900 dealing with investigations of a scientific nature in the field of religion. Among the pioneers of this period were Starbuck, Coe, and Hall.¹⁸ The first attempt to apply the inductive study of the Bible to a Sunday-school curriculum was made by Erastus Blakeslee, who succeeded in producing a completely graded series of Sunday-school units.¹⁹ John R. Sampey, quoting from an announcement of the courses promoted by the Bible Study Union (founded by Erastus Blakeslee), gives the following general characterization of the Blakeslee system:

- (1) A close and careful adaptation of the lesson material and methods of study to the needs of the pupil at each successive period of development.
- (2) A study of the Bible by the most effective modern methods.
- (3) A supplementing of the Bible by such other material as will best promote religious and moral development.
- (4) A practical application of the teachings of the Bible, with the aim of cultivating the social as well as individual morality and spirituality.
- (5) A constant endeavor to inspire and direct the pupils in giving expression to moral and religious truth.
- (6) The lessons for each year are so arranged that they can be used for nine months or twelve months.²⁰

During its early stages this series was entirely biblical, the first departure from this policy consisting of a series of missionary studies entitled *The Conquering Christ*, which was well received by teachers and pupils.²¹ The Bible Study Union then proceeded to issue courses which contained extrabiblical material. The Union regarded the Bible as the basis of religious instruction but felt that it should be supplemented by material drawn from other fields, believing that the divine agency which was at work in the Bible is still operative in the world.

The *Blakeslee Series*, a strong competitor of the Uniform Lessons, undoubtedly exerted a powerful influence in causing the International Lesson Committee to make changes in accordance

¹⁸ The investigations and conclusions may be found in such books as Starbuck, Edwin D., *The Psychology of Religion*, 1890; Coe, George Albert, *The Spiritual Life*, 1900; Coe, George Albert, *The Religion of a Mature Mind*, 1902; Coe, George Albert, *Education in Religion and Morals*, 1904; Hall, G. Stanley, *Psychology of Adolescence*, two volumes, 1903.

¹⁹ For a complete discussion of the Blakeslee Series see Haslett, S. B., *The Pedagogical Bible School*, pp. 54-66; Mcyer, H. H., *The Graded Sunday School in Principle and Practice*, pp. 86-87; Brown, *Sunday School Movements in America*, pp. 153-163; Sampey, John R., *The International Lesson System*, pp. 157-159.

²⁰ Sampey, John R., *The International Lesson System*, p. 158. Reprinted by permission of Fleming H. Revell Company, publishers.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

with the growing demands on the part of its constituency for a graded curriculum.

CHANGED CONCEPTIONS IN PUBLIC EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY

The new scientific spirit and method made themselves felt profoundly in the fields of education and psychology. Following the lead of Pestalozzi and Froebel, the public school determined to place the child at the center by the use of the best approved methods of educational science. These tendencies are reflected in a number of books dealing with education and psychology which appeared near the close of the nineteenth century and in the first few years of the twentieth.²² The influence of the movements in the public schools was felt in the church's demand for a richer curriculum suited to the needs of the pupils.²³

THE CREATION OF A NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL LITERATURE

Movements are usually preceded by agitation. However, profound changes in the fields of public education and psychology were in themselves no guarantee that similar changes might be expected in the field of the Sunday school; in fact, the creation of a new literature was necessary in order that definite progress might be made in religious education. This demand was created, in part, by the production of new books and articles whose purpose was to foster new educational ideals.

The Diocesan Sunday School Commission of New York sponsored in 1899 a series of lectures on the principles of religious education, which aroused great interest.²⁴ Following the publication of this series of lectures a number of books dealing with

²² A few of these books will be noted here: Baldwin, J. M., *Mental Development*, 1897; Dewey, John, *Psychology*, 1886; Gordy, J. P., *New Psychology*, 1898; Harris, W. T., *Psychological Foundations of Education*, 1898; De Garmo, *Interest and Education*, 1902; Compayre, G., *Lectures on Pedagogy*, 1884; Warner, F. W., *The Study of Children*, 1897; Putman, Daniel, *Textbook of Psychology*, 1901; Hall, G. Stanley, *Adolescence*, 1908; Roark, R. N., *Method in Education*, 1899; James, Johnnot, *Principle and Practice of Teaching*, 1896; Barrett, S. M., *Practical Pedagogy*, 1908.

²³ Francis W. Parker, of Chicago, held that the entire course of study should be built around the natural and social sciences. The National Education Association through its committees of "Ten" and "Fifteen" give attention to the curriculum of both the elementary and secondary schools. As a result of a great deal of agitation, the public school broadened its curriculum to include more biographical, and historical material. The same interest in a broader curriculum that was so evident around the beginning of the twentieth century encouraged the study of more literature such as the great English classics even in the elementary school.

²⁴ Butler, *Principles of Religious Education*. This book contains the series of lectures.

the problem of the organization of the Sunday school appeared.²⁵ Interest seemed to center in the study of the child and of the methods by which the child could be taught successfully.²⁶

ORGANIZATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS

The achievement of a graded curriculum was greatly accelerated by certain organized agencies, the most important of which are noted here.

The International Primary Union. This organization was perhaps the most important agency in the movement for securing graded lessons for the younger ages in the Sunday school.²⁷ After primary unions had been found to be of service in New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, the National Primary Union was organized in 1884. In 1887 it became affiliated with the International Sunday School Association, and became in 1896 a department of that association. In 1902 it was incorporated into the International Sunday School Association as the Elementary Department.

The Sunday School Editorial Association. Since the International Lesson Committee did not issue lesson helps, each denomination provided its editor and lesson writers. Previous to 1901 the editors and writers in the various denominations had followed their individual courses of procedure irrespective of, or indifferent to, the activities of one another.²⁸ Occasionally at the triennial International Conventions they entered into friendly intercourse, but they had never organized in any effective way. In April, 1901, representative editors and publishers at a meeting in New York organized the Sunday School Editorial Association.²⁹ In this organization were included all editors, lesson-

²⁵ Haslett, S. B., *The Pedagogical Bible School*; Burton and Matthews, *Principles and Ideals in the Sunday School*; and Hurlbut, Jesse, *Organization of the Sunday School*, are examples of this type of literature.

²⁶ The work by G. Stanley Hall in his study of adolescence is significant here and the investigations of Starbuck and Coe gave the churches more definite data upon which to proceed. The Religious Education Association through its journal and monographs did much to bring the best educational theory and practice to the attention of Sunday-school workers.

²⁷ One may secure a good account of its work from the *Official Report of the Eleventh International Convention* 1905, pages 82 and 83 and from Sampey, John R., *The International Lesson System*, Chapter V.

²⁸ See the *Official Report of the Eleventh International Convention*, p. 560.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 560.

writers, and publishers, denominational and undenominational, who used the International Sunday-school lessons in their curricula. Almost immediately, the Editorial Association and the Lesson Committee began to co-operate on lesson material, and in April, 1901, the Association recommended to the Lesson Committee that it prepare a separate course of lessons for Sunday-school children under six years of age, and a two year course of study for the adult or senior classes.³⁰ J. A. McKamy, a member of the Editorial Association, said in 1905, "At the invitation of the Lesson Committee, the Association is lending its advice in improving the uniform system of lessons."³¹

The Religious Education Association. Out of the Convention for Religious and Moral Education which met in Chicago, February 10-12, 1903, came the Religious Education Association. A resolution of the convention defined the scope and purpose of the new association in the following sentence: "It is not the purpose to publish a series of Sunday-school lessons or to compete with existing Sunday-school or other organizations, but, rather, to advance religious and moral education through such agencies."³² The members of the Convention for Religious and Moral Education were convinced that an organization was needed to study the problems in this field, to furnish information with respect to them, and to promote higher ideals and methods in religious education.

True to the conviction expressed in the Convention of 1903, the Religious Education Association has never issued lesson material, but through its annual conventions, its journal, and its various departments it has sought to serve as a means of unifying, stimulating, and developing all the forces for the promotion of religion and morality.³³ The Association throughout its history, among other things has labored for a curriculum suited to the needs of childhood and youth.³⁴

³⁰ Sampey, John R., *The International Lesson System*, p. 173. Reprinted by permission of Fleming H. Revell Company, publishers.

³¹ *The Official Report of the Eleventh International Convention*, p. 562.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 563.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 564.

³⁴ Cope, Henry F., *The Evolution of the Sunday School*, p. 142. See also *Religious Education*, vol. xx, No. 4, p. 306.

The Graded Lesson Conference. This body was organized in 1906 through the efforts of Mrs. J. W. Barnes, the elementary superintendent of the International Association. The Executive Committee of the Association had granted Mrs. Barnes freedom of action in the preparation of graded courses of instruction and directed her to co-operate with the Lesson Committee, the denominational editors, and any others who might be planning graded courses for primary and junior children, and to report her recommendations to the Executive Committee. In October, 1906, Mrs. Barnes called together a group of workers in Newark, New Jersey, concerning which meeting John R. Sampey writes: "In selecting the members of the Graded Lesson Conference, as it came to be named, the elementary superintendent considered chiefly their fitness for the task in hand, but also their relations to the various denominations, their ability to command the services of educators, and their willingness to give their time and energy free. . . ."³⁵

The conference undertook to select lesson material for the Primary and Junior Departments of the Sunday school and to revise the Beginner's course which was already in use. This work, when completed, was submitted to the Lesson Committee for its consideration. As a result of the influence of the Graded Lesson Conference and the Boston Conference,³⁶ the International Lesson Committee in its report to the International Convention in June, 1908, recommended the preparation of a thoroughly graded series of lessons.³⁷

Schools of Method and Demonstration.³⁸ A really novel force which became effective about this time was the schools of method and demonstration which made a significant contribution to the movement for a graded curriculum.

(1) *Schools of Method.* Perhaps the most important of these have been the schools at Northfield, Massachusetts, Winona Lake, Indiana, and Asbury Park, New Jersey.

³⁵ Sampey, John Richard, *The International Lesson System*, p. 182. Reprinted by permission of Fleming H. Revell Company, publishers.

³⁶ The conference is given further consideration in the next chapter in connection with the origin of the *International Closely Graded Series*.

³⁷ *Official Report of the Thirteenth International Sunday-School Convention*, p. 456.

³⁸ For a quite thorough treatment of this subject, see Meyer, Henry H., *The Graded School in Principle and Practice*, chap. x, pp. 115-125, and Sampey, John R., *The International Lesson System*, p. 168ff.

In 1894 the Rev. E. Morris Fergusson organized in Asbury Park, New Jersey, the "Summer School of Primary Methods." It was here that in 1896 Miss Anna Williams delivered a course of lectures denouncing the current Sunday-school methods. In that same year Mrs. J. W. Barnes discussed with the teachers the materials that ought to be taught to Primary pupils. In 1897 a course on Child Nature was offered in the New Jersey School of Methods by Miss Margaret Cushman. One of the lectures in the course, entitled "Teaching the Bible to Little Children," was so favorably received that Rev. E. M. Fergusson proposed that Miss Cushman prepare the outline of such a course and present it to the members of the School of Methods. Later the outline became the basis for a course of lessons for Beginners and was first published by the New Jersey *Sunday School Messenger*, a paper edited by the Rev. E. M. Fergusson. In 1899 this course, published by the Fleming H. Revell Company, met with marked favor among teachers of the youngest pupils. It would appear, from the interest taken in graded lessons by the New Jersey Summer School of Methods, that this institution had some part at least in the larger movement for a graded curriculum.

(2) *Schools of Demonstration.* The purpose at this point is not to discuss the present status of Schools of Demonstration, but, rather, to consider their relation historically to the development of a graded curriculum. From this standpoint, the early character and activities of the Schools of Demonstration are relevant to our study.

(a) *The Hyde Park Baptist Sunday School, Chicago.*³⁹ In 1899 Dr. William H. Harper received a request from the Hyde Park Baptist Church, Chicago, to become the superintendent of its Sunday school. Doctor Harper, believing that the school offered an opportunity for experimentation and demonstration, accepted the position.

Having been assured by the church that he would have free rein in formulating and executing the education program of the

³⁹ For a rather detailed statement of this experiment the writer has relied upon a *History of the Constructive Studies* inclosed with a letter to George H. Betts, January 31, 1922, by G. L. Chamberlin.

church, on the first Sunday, Doctor Harper dismissed all teachers and pupils from the school, and the following Sunday the pupils were re-enrolled and teachers assigned to their classes. In the reorganization of the school the departments were arranged as follows:—Kindergarten: three to six years; elementary: first to the fourth grades; secondary: fifth to eighth grades; high-school and adult departments. A principal was appointed for each department.

The next task was to procure or create suitable lesson material. William H. Harper, Ernest D. Burton, and others who were interested and competent, constituted a Committee on Curriculum and decided to create as rapidly as possible the material for each grade. This material was later published by the University of Chicago Press, and is now known as *The Constructive Studies in Religion*, one of the major graded series. In this manner the work carried on in the Hyde Park Baptist School made its contribution to the graded curriculum.

(b) *The Hyde Park Congregational School, Chicago*.⁴⁰ This Sunday school in its earlier stages, at least, drew many of its leaders from the faculty of the University of Chicago. Although it made limited provision for adult classes, its chief objective was to serve the pupils in the educational period of life (4-24). The school was placed on a graded basis throughout. The school year began in September and ended in June.

In the kindergarten years the aim was to have the pupils learn and practice the first principles of goodness, such as love, kindness, and obedience. In the primary years an attempt was made to fix in the pupils' minds right ideas of the natural world and of human life. In the Intermediate Department (10-13) the main objectives were to develop a right ideal of personal religion in the pupil, and secure his membership in the church. In the high-school years the work was planned to give the pupils a knowledge of the Bible. In the College Department (18-21) the students were directed in their study along the lines of Christian activities and practical ethics. In the Graduate Department (22-24), studies were pursued which were calculated to

⁴⁰ For further information see Meyer, Henry H., *The Graded School in Principle and Practice*, p. 121ff.

give the students a knowledge and an appreciation of Christianity and of the nature and obligations of religion and morality.

When a pupil completed the elementary school (age 13) he was graduated and given a certificate. At seventeen, when he had completed the High School Department, he was presented with a diploma, and at the completion of the College and Graduate Departments, suitable recognition was also given.

Since this school represents one of the earliest attempts at thorough gradation, and since the work was carried on under such competent leadership, it may properly be regarded as a model demonstration of how a Sunday school may be graded properly.

(c) *Union School of Religion*.⁴¹ Originally a part of Teachers' College and unrelated to any church organization, but administered by an executive committee elected by the parents of the children, the Union School of Religion met on Sunday in the classrooms of Columbia University. In 1910 the school was moved to Union Theological Seminary and became a part of the Department of Religious Education in that institution. The aim of the Union School of Religion is threefold: (1) to apply to the teaching of religion the most improved methods known to educational practice, (2) to train leaders and teachers competent to serve in this and other schools, and (3) to accumulate a body of knowledge as to procedure and practice which may be of service to other Sunday schools.⁴²

The pupils pay a small fee to defray part of the running expenses, and the teachers receive a nominal remuneration for their services. The school is graded according to the grades in the public school. In keeping with the second part of the threefold aim, the training class has been an important feature of the school. The work of the members in this class consists of reports, discussions, library work, and observation of teaching.

Worship has ever been a matter of special emphasis in the program of this school. Every attempt is made to have the pupils

⁴¹ For more detailed information consult *The Encyclopedia of Sunday Schools and Religious Education*, vol. iii, p. 1120.

⁴² Coe, George Albert, "The Union School of Religion," *The Encyclopedia of Sunday Schools and Religious Education*, vol. iii, p. 1120.

enter intelligently and effectively into the experience of worship. There is also a definite attempt to train the pupils in Christian service. For example, the pupils bring their offering, and a part of this is distributed among worthy causes by a decision of the class after consultation with the teacher. Another part of the offering is used for the general project of the school, which may be the care of a local charity or the support of a missionary abroad. At the close of the school each year there is an exhibit of the year's work insofar as it can be displayed, and to this the parents, patrons, and friends of the school are invited.

Since this was one of the earliest Sunday schools to be graded⁴³ under competent leadership, it has served along with the other schools (previously discussed) as a model of how religion may be taught to childhood and youth in the different stages of their development.

Summary

All of the factors which have been presented in this chapter, such as the dissatisfaction with the Uniform Lessons, changed conception in religion, changed points of view in the fields of education and psychology, a new Sunday-school literature, schools of method for teachers, and demonstration schools of religion, have had a profound influence directly and indirectly in bringing about the recent developments in the graded curriculum of religious education.

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⁴³ Meyer, Henry H., *The Graded School in Principle and Practice*, p. 116.

CHAPTER XIV

MODERN GRADED SYSTEMS

THIS chapter describes briefly the more important types of graded curricula which are being studied in the Protestant Sunday schools in America.

CURRENT GRADED CURRICULA: INTERDENOMINATIONAL AND INDEPENDENT

The *International Graded Lessons* are given considerably fuller treatment than that accorded other series. This does not mean that they have been singled out for approval or disapproval. It is, rather, because of their being the product of the International Lesson Committee, which represents (unofficially) a considerable proportion of the Protestant Church, and because they are more widely used than any other graded lesson materials among our churches.

The International Closely Graded Lessons. In spite of the fact that the *International Group Graded Lessons* are now available for the Primary and Junior Departments,¹ and that certain denominations have issued graded lessons of their own, this series is widely used in all departments of the church school.²

(1) *Origin of the series.* The *International Graded Lessons* are based upon Scripture material selected by the International Lesson Committee.³ The Graded Lesson Conference, meeting in 1906, decided to revise the Beginner's Course of Study, which was already in use, and to select lesson material for the pre-adolescent years. When the units (nine in all) were completed

¹ The Presbyterian Book Concern, of Chicago, gave out information in 1925 that their sales of *Group Graded*, *International Closely Graded*, and *Westminster Departmental Graded Lessons* ran about even. (Personal interview.)

² The Baptists and Presbyterians have developed lessons of their own quite similar to the *International Closely Graded Lessons*.

³ For a more detailed study of the origin of the series consult the *International Lesson System* by John R. Sampey and the *Official Report of the Twelfth International Convention*, 1908.

by the Graded Conference they were submitted to the Editorial Association for any suggestions and co-operation which that body might care to render. In turn the lesson outlines were presented to the International Lesson Committee for their consideration.

At this point the chairman of the Executive Committee of the International Association called the representative Sunday-school workers of America to meet in conference in Boston, January 2, 1908. The Editorial Association, the Graded Lesson Conference, the International Executive Committee, and the International Lesson Committee were represented in this conference. This body felt that the demand for graded lessons should be met by the International Sunday School Association and that the Lesson Committee should issue the outlines. The convictions of this conference were incorporated in the report of the Lesson Committee to the International Convention held in Louisville, Kentucky, in June, 1908. The International Convention adopted the report and authorized the Lesson Committee to prepare and submit to the denominations the outlines of a completely graded series. This, in brief, is the origin of the *Graded Series*. The present form which it assumes as used by the various denominations is the result of the editorial work of those individual denominations.

(2) *General characteristics of the International Graded Lessons.*⁴ The series is graded by years, the material being arranged in Cycles. The following is a recent announcement of the characteristics of the series in question:

At first the material is presented in story form, topically arranged:

- I. Stories telling of God's power.
- II. Stories calling forth love, trust and obedience.
- III. Stories showing obedience to God's will.

Then, in the ages when the powers to memorize and to reason are deepening and the habits of activity are being formed, the mind is stored with the great facts of the Bible story in the form of narratives chronologically arranged:

- IV. Early Old Testament Stories.
Stories that Jesus Told.

⁴ The characterizations of the *International Graded Lessons* included here are based on the *Berean Series*, published by the Graded Press, New York, under the joint editorial supervision of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Church, South, and the Congregational Church.

- V. Stories of Everyday Heroes.
 Stories of the Hero of Heroes.
 Stories of Heroic followers of Jesus.
 Stories of Old Testament Heroes.
- VI. Stories of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah.
 Stories of the exile and return.
 Introduction to New Testament Times.
- VII. The Gospel of Mark.
 Missionary Stories.
 Our Bible and how it came to us.
 Studies in the Acts.

Then, when life is taking on a new meaning and youth is discovering himself and achieving his freedom in the days of adolescence, the Bible history is approached for a third time, from the standpoint of biography, and life studies:

- VIII. Leaders of Israel, Religious Leaders in North America.
- IX. Early Christian leaders, Christian leaders.
 Studies in friendship.
- X. The life of the man, Christ Jesus.
 The life of David Livingstone.
- XI. Fundamental principles of the Christian life.
 The organization of the Christian life.
 The church.
 The textbook of the Christian life, the Bible.

Later still, in the days when the foundations of manhood and womanhood are being laid in the visions of dawning manhood and womanhood, when reason is developing and the individual is seeking life's rational basis, the fundamental principles of Christian living are studied from the standpoint of Christian and social ethics. Finally, in the days of the maturing of powers, when the adjustments of life are being made and the individual is finding his place in the great world of work, the Bible is approached from the standpoint of the development of the literature. The pupil has caught a vision of the whole sweep of history and he is helped to adjust himself to the world which stretches back into the past and forward into the unmeasured future.

- XII. The world a field for Christian service.
 The problems of youth and social life.
 Studies in the books of Ruth and James.
- XIII. A Survey of the Old Testament.
- XIV. A Survey of the New Testament.
- XV. a. The Bible and social living.
 b. Church history from Apostolic times to the present.⁵

The *International Graded Series* has an inclusive aim "To meet the spiritual needs of the pupil in each stage of his development," an aim for each Cycle or age group such as Primary, Junior, etc., an aim for each unit, and an aim for each lesson.

⁵ *Aims and Outlines of the Graded Courses*, The Methodist Book Concern, New York, 1924.

(3) *The types of material used.* One needs only to study carefully the general outline of courses to discover that the material is both biblical and extra-biblical. Dr. Leonidas W. Crawford found through a statistical study of the series that, according to his classification, the content is 52.7 per cent biblical, 31.1 percent quasi-biblical, and 16.2 percent extra-biblical,⁶ the latter material being drawn from nature, literature, history, and biography.

(4) *Points of strength in the series.* A thorough understanding of the *International Closely Graded series* ought to leave little doubt in one's mind as to their superiority as lesson material over the Uniform Lessons which they were intended to displace. Some of the points of strength in this graded Series may be stated as follows:

(a) The material is centered around definite objectives, with an aim for the entire series, for each department, and for each lesson. For example, "The general purpose of the *Graded Lessons* is: To meet the spiritual needs of the pupil in each stage of his development."⁷

The aim for the Primary Department is stated thus: "To lead the child to know the Heavenly Father, and to inspire within him a desire to live as God's child. *1st year*, to show forth God's power, love, and care and to awaken within the child responsive love, trust and obedience. *2nd year*, to build on the teachings of the first year (a) by showing ways to express their love, trust, and obedience; (b) by showing Jesus the Saviour in his love and work for men; and (c) by showing how helpers of Jesus learn to do God's will. *3rd year*, to build on the teachings of the first and second years by telling (a) about people who chose to do God's will; (b) how Jesus, by his life and words, death and resurrection, revealed the Father's love and will for us; (c) such stories as will make a strong appeal to the child and arouse within him a desire

⁶ Crawford, Leonidas W., *The Status and Evaluation of Extra-biblical Material in the Curriculum of Religious Education in the United States*, p. 120. Unpublished Doctor's thesis, Northwestern University. Mr. Crawford defines biblical material as that which is taken direct from the Bible either in the form of passages or selections printed therefrom. "By quasi-biblical is understood material based upon the Bible or selections therefrom treated in an expository, didactic, ethical, or doctrinal manner. By extra-biblical is understood material other than from the Bible used for definite religious purposes or ends." *Id.* 21

⁷ *Aim and Outlines of the Graded Course*, p. 2, The Methodist Book Concern, not dated.

to choose and to do that which God requires of him."⁸ The aim for lesson one in the first year of the Primary Department is stated thus: "The aim or purpose of this lesson is that of directing the thoughts of the pupil to the things that may be clearly seen in the world of nature, and of teaching him that all things have been created by the power and might of God."⁹

(b) The series is based upon the conviction that the religious life of childhood and youth is an unfolding process. This conviction is definitely embodied in the aim for the entire course, which seeks to meet the spiritual needs of the pupils in each stage of their development. In other words, the makers of this series are not waiting for some cataclysm which will suddenly and permanently change the life, but, rather, they believe in fitting the developing life for each day's living and in enriching and equipping a personality that grows into something greater with each added Cycle of time.¹⁰

(c) Taken as a whole, the series offers biblical material which is psychologically much better suited to pupils than the biblical material of the Uniform Lessons. For example, young children are very much interested in babies, calls of birds, cries of animals, stories about angels and wise men.¹¹ Some of the themes for children four and five years of age are: "A Mother and Her Little Boy," "The Heavenly Father's Care for Birds and Animals," "A Baby in a Basket-Boat," "The Story of the Baby Jesus," "The Visit of the Wise Men," and "Jesus Loving Little Children." Junior boys and girls are interested in heroes¹² who can perform physical feats of daring and adventure. The biblical material for age ten, for example, is given under the titles, "Stories of the Hero of Heroes" (Jesus), and "Stories of Old Testament Heroes."

⁸ *Primary Teacher's Textbook*, Third Year, Part I, Foreword, p. vii, prepared by Marion Thomas.

⁹ *Ibid.*, First Year, Part I, p. 26.

¹⁰ *The Aims and Outlines of the Graded Courses*, p. 1, published by The Methodist Book Concern, no date assigned.

¹¹ Koffka, Kurt, *The Growth of the Mind*, p. 350. With reference to the interests of young children, Professor Koffka says: "The Christ-child; the Christmas-Eve manger with its figures of men, angels and beasts—these are realities corresponding to the child's world." See also Sully, James, *Studies of Childhood*, pp. 46, 92, 247.

¹² Norsworthy, Naomi and Whitley, Mary T., *Psychology of Childhood*, pp. 295-296. With reference to the story interests of this age these authors say, "They [pupils 9-11] are not advanced enough to generalize principles of conduct" (page 292). "They have acquired . . . a contempt for physical cowardice, an admiration for fearlessness, grit, and ability to endure hardship" (page 294). Tales of action, power, and courage appeal more especially to boys than to girls of this age (page 295).

In the adolescent years the pupils are still interested in heroes, but they demand that the characters be not only brave, but chivalrous, sacrificing, loyal, and trustworthy to a greater degree than they did in pre-adolescence.¹³ The biblical material for age thirteen, for instance, centers around such themes as these: "The Struggle with Self (Jacob the Victor)," "Loyalty to Self (Joseph in Home and Prison)," "Patriotism (Moses the Founder of a Nation)," "Loyalty to Duty (Joshua, the Conqueror)," "Fidelity (David, the Boy who was True to His Trust)," "Helpfulness (Elijah, the Friend and Patriot)," and "Loyalty to God (Elijah, the Champion of True Religion)." In the very nature of the case, a uniform lesson for all ages precludes any such adaptation as the graded lessons offer.

(d) Even though the *International Closely Graded Lessons* are four fifths biblical,¹⁴ it is encouraging to find in them the use of extra-biblical material, which is a recognition on the part of the makers of this series that God's work did not cease with the closing of the biblical canon, but that he has since that time continued to be active in the lives of men; and that such extra-biblical material, when suited to the needs of childhood and youth, is deserving of a place in the religious curriculum. For example, the thirteen-year-olds study not only the heroes of Israel, such as David and Elijah, but also the religious heroes of North America, such as Roger Williams, Francis Asbury, Jacob Riis, and John B. Gough. Twelve-year-old pupils study the gospel stories and also missionary stories, such as "Alexander Duff's First School in India," "Peter Parker, 'Opening China at the Point of the Lancet,'" "Murata and the Bible in Japan," and "Sheldon Jackson and the Reindeer of Alaska."¹⁵

(e) The *International Graded Lessons* would appear to be far more interesting to the pupil than the Uniform Lessons, since they present material more in keeping with the needs, interests, and

¹³ Pease, George W., *An Outline of a Bible School Curriculum* (p. 221). In this connection Mr. Pease says, "There is a change [ages 12-15] and an advance from selfishness to unselfishness, and a decided development of general social and altruistic impulses" (p. 221).

¹⁴ Leonidas W. Crawford in a statistical analysis of the *International Graded Lessons* finds that only 16.2 per cent of the material is extra-biblical. *The Status and Evaluation of Extra-biblical Material in the Curriculum of Religious Education in the United States*, p. 120. Unpublished Doctor's thesis, Northwestern University.

¹⁵ Baldwin, Josephine, *Missionary Stories*.

capacities of children. Interest is a big factor in achievement and material capable of calling it forth is a strong argument in its favor.

(f) The series is intended to influence daily conduct as well as to furnish information about God's activities in the past and his influence upon men and women of old. Take, for example, the unit entitled, *The World: A Field For Christian Service*, by Sidney A. Weston, for age seventeen. This is intended to furnish material for a discussion group which is trying to discover the needs of the world and the qualities of efficiency required in the home, school, church, and business. The aim of the course, in part, is to help young people see life from the Christian point of view and to suggest to them ways of meeting their life problems. In keeping with this objective, twenty-six lessons are planned on the opportunity and challenge of the world as a field of Christian service and fourteen lessons deal with the problems confronted by youth in meeting the experiences of daily life.

To be specific, let us examine the plan of lesson four, which is entitled, "Standards of Success." In accordance with the assignment of the previous Sunday the students have prepared a list of people whom they consider to be successful. After these lists are read and defended, the teacher asks the young people to give their ideas of success. After the attention of the class is shifted to Jesus, the students attempt to discover, from the Gospels, the elements of success as Jesus would interpret them. Since this discussion may have caused or should cause some reconstruction in thinking, the question of what constitutes a successful life is raised for a second time. As this phase of the question is developed, the teacher is requested by the lesson plan to help the young people come to the conviction that they can be successful only as they live each day in accord with the Giver of life and his laws. After the teacher has pointed out what this harmony with God and his laws involves, the young people are asked to be on the watch during the coming week to see how the world challenges them to live a successful life in the light of Jesus' standards. This is but one example of how the makers of the *Graded Series* attempted to influence the daily life of the pupils.

(g) The *International Closely Graded Lessons* make some provision for the expressional life of the pupil. It might appear that the series as a whole places too much emphasis on imparting information and too little on helping the pupils to meet their life situations. Expressional activities are not entirely neglected, but are given a somewhat secondary place. For example, in the Primary Department the pupil may be asked to copy the memory verse, write something he remembers about Jesus, and write an explanation of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus.¹⁶ Furthermore, in Lesson 30, Third Year, Part III, the teacher is expected to explain what it means to be a Christian in such a way that the pupil will make an earnest effort to be helpful in his home, or wherever he may be, and be loving and kind in his relations with others.¹⁷ This is a definite attempt to connect the lesson with a life situation of the child, although pupils might have extreme difficulty in grasping and putting into practice those virtues so abstractly presented are they in this lesson.

Limitations in the series. On the other hand, the series possesses certain limitations:

1. The lessons are not sufficiently child centered. To one making an examination of the series there comes the impression that the attempt is being made to reach the pupil through the lesson material, instead of beginning with the pupil's life situation and using the material as illustrative, rather than as an end in itself. There is an overemphasis on actual material, and that mostly from the Bible. For example, in the lessons for the Beginner's Department there is a neglect of the child's everyday experiences and too much stress on teaching material for its own sake. The lessons for the Primary Department are almost entirely biblical, there being only twenty-five lessons in which God is approached through other than biblical stories. The lessons for the Junior ages are distinctly Bible-centered. *Heroes of Israel* is the unit of study for age thirteen, and, judging from the lesson treatment, it would appear that the primary concern is to present the Old Testament characters rather than to meet

¹⁶ Thomas, Marion, *The Primary Teacher's Textbook*, Third Year, Part III, pp. 207, 218, 226.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 226.

the needs of boys and girls who are thirteen years of age. The entire course of study for the Intermediate age contains only thirty-three lessons from literature, history, and realistic incidents outside the Bible. Part of the year's work for age fifteen is the unit called *David Livingstone, A Modern Disciple of Christ*, and again there is evidence of this same tendency to present the material in such a way that it is closely tied up with Scripture passages even though the connection may be very unnatural. It is questionable whether young people of eighteen and nineteen should be asked to make a detailed study of Old Testament history and literature, especially where there is not a successful attempt to correlate the material with the social, and vocational interests of this period.

Without doubt, experimentation in the field of curricula has not proceeded sufficiently far for one to state with certainty what the proportion of biblical and extra-biblical material should be, but a series in which four fifths of the material is biblical would seem to present a disproportionate range of material. Especially would this position be tenable in the light of the conviction that God's influence in the currents of history since the closing of the Sacred Canon, and his presence in present-day activities deserve at least an equal amount of emphasis in the religious curriculum as to that accorded to his dealings with the Hebrew people.

2. The lessons in this series fail to meet the threefold spiritual needs of childhood and youth—knowledge, loyalties, and conduct. There is sufficient stress on biblical knowledge as such, but as a whole the lessons lack motivation, would not appear to be especially successful in building loyalties, and are noticeably deficient in providing ways and means by which pupils may form proper conduct control. In the Junior courses, for example, scarcely any life situations are provided. The lesson material, since this is the case, fails to furnish an opportunity to boys and girls to have actual practice in living the "heroic life." There is in the unit *Studies in the Life of Christ* too little effort to motivate good attitudes and far too much stress on securing information for its own sake.

3. Oftentimes the lesson material does not fulfill adequately the objectives of a given period. For age nine, the *Stories from the Olden Time* are too difficult to meet the "aim" for that age, which is to be "a doer" of the word. The stories for age ten often fall below the level of heroic stories to the plane of mere biblical episodes. It is very doubtful whether a detailed and chronological study of the Hebrew people is the proper material to cause Junior pupils to desire to become "doers of the word." It is quite possible that biographies other than those of Hebrew characters might have been selected to set forth the ideal of heroic living to boys and girls thirteen years of age. It is exceedingly doubtful whether any teacher could use the material prepared for young people eighteen and nineteen years of age¹⁸ so as to help them adjust themselves to their enlarging world and help them form their life principles and interpret their personal experiences.

4. The lessons fail to meet the demands of our present-day social experiences. This is true because they are so consistently material-centered that their chief concern appears to be that of imparting information. Too many of the stories for the Primary children are out of touch with the child's social experiences. The lessons for Juniors are lacking in life-situations at a time when boys and girls are ready and eager for actual practice in the ideals presented. The "practical lessons" in the unit *Leaders of Israel* are often far removed from the problems of pupils of that age (Junior). The same defect is characteristic of *Christian Leaders* (age fourteen). Lessons in keeping with social and vocational interests are wanting.

5. The lesson material fails to utilize adequately the rich sources of religious experience. Since the lessons follow so closely one type of material (the Bible) they limit the fullness and freshness of their treatment. In the lessons for Beginners nature is too much lacking. "God's Great Out-of-Doors" is not sufficiently drawn upon. The same criticism would be valid in the lessons for Juniors. Great biography and literature other than the Bible are too frequently wanting. One wonders why later

¹⁸ *Old Testament History and Literature and History of New Testament Times.*

Christian history and literature were not more heavily drawn upon for the unit *Christian Leaders*.

6. The literary form and content of this series, taken as a whole, are not what the church has a right to expect for the use of its childhood and youth. Many of the stories in the Primary course are weak and have no real climax. Some of the story endings are made ineffective by an annoying exhortation to goodness. Many of the stories in the Primary course lack a dramatic element. There is little indirect discourse in these stories and often they are not arranged so as to lead on to a successful climax. In the lessons for Juniors the stories often lack "pull" and many times are interrupted by questions in the text itself. Often the lessons for age fifteen¹⁹ make impossible a gripping climax because they introduce too many concepts into a single story. The unit *Christian Living* (age fifteen) deserves praise in that it recognizes youth as a discoverer, but it fails oftentimes to present its material in a dramatic or gripping way. In the units *History and Literature of the Hebrew People* and *History of New Testament Times* the style is often plodding, and the climaxes, many times, are not well planned.

7. The *Closely Graded Series* leaves much to be desired in the way of teaching helps. In the unit *Gospel Stories* (age twelve) the outline of the books is too difficult for the pupil to work out as home work. There is too much written work. The advance assignments appear to be too difficult in the volume *Christian Leaders* (age fourteen). Many times the approaches to the lesson in this unit are not satisfactory. The expressional work, which usually consists of writing a composition or in giving an explanation, fails to meet the present-day social demands of that age. In the unit *Christian Living* (age fifteen) the problem-project method is notably lacking. There is no stated aim for each lesson. The teaching aids are not well organized. The volume *The World a Field for Christian Service* (age seventeen) includes "problems" but probably too little material is presented to give the pupil sufficient information to cope with the "problem" adequately. The unit *History and Literature of the Hebrew*

¹⁹ *David Livingstone—A Modern Disciple of Christ.*

People (age eighteen) should include a bibliography for the use of both pupil and teacher. The assignments are not provided for in this unit with any effectiveness. There is no stated aim for almost one third of the lessons in the *History of New Testament Times* and there is but little suggested information to the teacher so that she may enrich her own background of the field covered.

8. The mechanical features of the series could be greatly improved. Since the units are printed in periodical form and bound in paper they are neither durable nor very attractive. Then other mechanical features are open to objection. The double columns for the elementary grades rob the pages of a certain attractiveness. The length of lines, spaces, margins, size of print, and the set up of paragraphs and sections are not up to the standards of a modern textbook.

In a consideration of the limitations of the *International Closely Graded series* it is only fair to point out two things: (1) this Series was a pioneer in the field of graded lessons; and (2) the Series is at present undergoing a revision which it was, of course, impossible to take into account in this study.

The Constructive Studies in Religion. This series grew out of actual experimentation.

(1) *Origin of the series.* William R. Harper, of the University of Chicago, was the moving spirit in the creation of these lessons. When he became superintendent of the Sunday school of the Hyde Park Baptist Church of Chicago, he was given the liberty to conduct the school as he thought best. His first task was to reorganize the classes on a closely graded basis. The next problem he faced was that of suitable curriculum. Here a bold step was taken when it was decided that a new curriculum should be created for the school. Mr. Harper organized a competent committee that began to create material for each grade as rapidly as possible. The plan was first to mimeograph the material, use it tentatively, revise it after a year's use, and then, if it seemed wise, to publish it. When we bear in mind that this plan was conceived in 1899 as an experiment which had scarcely any precedents, we begin to realize the problem involved.

At first it was thought best to begin the preparation of material with units for the kindergarten, the fourth, seventh, and eighth grades, and for the adult group. Later, however, units for all ages were prepared.

Twenty-five years have elapsed since the series was planned and in that time interest in religious education has greatly increased and investigation and experiments have multiplied. In the light of the latest developments in the field of religious education, the editors of the *Constructive Studies* have attempted to revise all books and to provide additional units.

(2) *General characteristics.* The *Constructive Studies* consist of "more than thirty separate books and pamphlets graded from the kindergarten to adult years, teacher's books well bound, permanent volumes; pupils textbooks in paper or cloth editions, pupils' notebooks furnished with pictures, maps, and all accessories."²⁰ Although the lessons were prepared for specific use in a Baptist Sunday school, the series is nondenominational in spirit, purpose, and content. The grading corresponds to that in the public school—one grade being covered each year—although the units prepared for the primary grades (first, second, and third grades in the public schools, six to eight years of age) may be used interchangeably.²¹

(3) *Types of material used.* The *Constructive Studies* draw heavily from biblical materials. Of the seventeen units above the primary ages, ten are based upon the Bible. For age fifteen there is a choice between the *Hebrew Prophets* and the *Problems of Boyhood*. For ages nine to sixteen inclusive, one unit (that for age fifteen) may be found that is not taken directly from the Bible, or does not deal with the Bible.²² According to the calculations of Leonidas W. Crawford, 32.7 per cent of the lesson material is biblical, 52 per cent is quasi-biblical, and 15.3 per cent is extra-biblical.²³

The *Constructive Studies In Religion* are about to undergo a decided revision. Former units are to be rewritten, or replaced

²⁰ The University of Chicago Press, Announcement for 1924.

²¹ Printed Announcement of the Chicago Press, 1924.

²² An illustration of the latter is *An Introduction to the Bible for Teachers of Children*, for age nine.

²³ Crawford, Leonidas W., *Status and Evaluation of Extra-biblical Materials*, p. 160.

by new courses. When the series is re-edited it will have a double emphasis: "(1) A series of life courses or project problems which emphasize method or principle, (2) A series of secondary or source materials. In these, biblical and other source material will be presented in a form that makes them usable with the project method."²⁴

The Completely Graded Series. Growing out of a dissatisfaction with the *International Uniform Lessons*, another attempt was made to meet a demand for better lessons.

(1) *Origin of the series.* The *Completely Graded Series* is a continuation of the lessons conceived and outlined by Erastus Blakeslee. Previous to 1906 Mr. Blakeslee had outlined units covering six years. About 1906 he conceived the idea of extending his plan into a completely graded series, and associated with himself scholars and editors to perform the task. Four years later, in 1910, Mr. Blakeslee died, but not until preliminary plans for the entire series had been completed and some of the units already published. In 1911 Charles Scribner's Sons took over the publications edited by Mr. Blakeslee and continued to perfect the series.²⁵

(2) *General description of the Completely Graded Series:*

The fundamental aim of this series is to teach the pupil at each age, what it means to be a Christian at that age. Each lesson in the entire course of study has in view some well-defined advance in the pupil's moral and religious life. This includes,

- (a) Religious instruction.
- (b) Training in worship.
- (c) Training in service.

From beginning to end, this curriculum guides pupils in the performance of specific duties toward one's neighbor. Beginning with the simplest acts of kindness and helpfulness, and obedience in the family, it goes on to problems of school conduct, the relief of suffering, the spread of missions, and the maintenance of the varied work of the church.

- (d) Training in Christian Citizenship.

This training enters into the aims of these lessons at many points. The political conduct of Israel's rulers, the humanitarian legislation in Deuteronomy, the social preaching of the prophets, the social work

²⁴ Winchester, Benjamin S., *The Report of Progress in Religious Education During the Biennium, 1923-1924, Religious Education*, vol. xx, No. 2, p. 150.

²⁵ History of the Scribner's Completely Graded Series loaned by the publishers.

of the churches, and direct analysis of modern social conditions and of the duties of a voter—all these and many other illustrations are used to prepare pupils to exercise their citizenship in the spirit of Jesus.²⁶

The lesson material is printed in quarterly units with paper covers in order to reduce the cost to the school using the series. All the material for pupils and teachers except the Primary cards and the Junior weekly leaflets are supplied either in paper covers or in cloth-bound complete volumes covering lessons for an entire year. The mechanical features of the series are poor: the pages are crowded, the paper is of a poor quality, the print is too small, and the section and paragraph divisions are poorly arranged.

(3) *Types of material used.* The lesson material is drawn from the Bible, geography of biblical lands, church history, missionary materials, and biography. The material for the Beginners and for the Primary ages is taken from the Bible and is in the form of stories. The Bible forms the bulk of the curriculum for the Junior ages, which concludes with the struggle and achievements of the early Christians before the conversion of northern Europe. The Intermediate period represents a departure from the biblical material, permitting the pupil to study not only heroes of the faith included in the Bible but those in later Christian history as well. Attention is given to Christian life and conduct, the geography of Bible lands, the story of the Bible, young people's problems, and the life of Jesus. The lessons for the Senior age are mostly nonbiblical and have to do with Christian history, modern missions, and the modern church. The first year only is biblical. The advanced lessons beyond the Senior ages are dominantly biblical. According to the study of Doctor Crawford, 16.5 per cent of the series is biblical, 39 per cent quasi-biblical, and 44.4 per cent extra-biblical.²⁷

The Group Graded Lessons. The lessons which come under this title are sponsored by the International Lesson Committee.

(1) *Origin of the Group Graded Series.* On December 30, 1920, the Lesson Committee authorized the construction of a series of

²⁶ Announcement of Lessons by Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924.

²⁷ Crawford, Leonidas, *The Status and Evaluation of Extra-biblical Material in the Curriculum of Religious Education in the United States*, p. 156.

lessons by age-groups. The declaration of policy was as follows:

1. That the International Lesson Committee continue to issue *Improved Uniform Lessons*, in such cycles and with such material as its judgment may from time to time approve, but, beginning with 1924, with adaptations to the Intermediate, Senior, Young People's and Adult Departments only.

2. That the Committee recognize the *Primary Group Lessons* and the *Junior Group Lessons*, beginning with 1924, as substitutes, within the *Improved Uniform Series*, for the Primary and Junior adaptations hitherto issued.

3. That the Committee recognize the *Improved Uniform Lessons*, beginning with 1924, as an alternative course, within the *Group Graded Series*, for all pupils above the Junior Age group.

4. That the Committee thus plan and issue for schools which do not wish to use lessons graded by years the following courses:

A. Primary Group Lessons in a three-year Cycle.

B. Junior Group Lessons in a three-year Cycle.

C. Improved Uniform Les- Intermediate Group Lessons
 sons in a six-year Cycle or Senior Group Lessons
 Adult Group Lessons
 in three-year Cycles.²⁸

Lessons for Primary and Junior age-groups are now available.²⁹

(2) *General description of the Group Graded Lessons.* The plan of lessons proposed by the International Committee is not unlike the plan for the *Westminster Departmental Graded Lessons* in its general aspects. According to the Lesson Committee, the following principles were kept in mind in the construction of the Group Lessons:

"1. These lessons are to be graded. They are to be pupil-centered rather than material-centered. The aim of the series as a whole is to nurture the growing moral and religious life of the child, and to lead to a permanent commitment of that life to God through Jesus Christ, and to fitness for service in his

²⁸ *Group Uniform Series, Primary Course 1925*, preface. Copy secured from the Secretary of the Lesson Committee.

²⁹ 1925

kingdom. The materials for the lessons are to be chosen with a view to their fitness to accomplish this aim throughout the different periods of the child's growth, rather than with a view to their logical completeness or chronological order.

"2. These lessons are to be graded to the capacities and needs of three-year age-groups of children, rather than to the capacities and needs of single age-years. Within each age-group all children are to have the same lesson; and the lessons, therefore, must move in three-year Cycles. Within the Cycle for each group, the lessons for the three years shall be of approximately equal difficulty, and no one year's lessons shall presuppose those of another year.

"3. From age-group to age-group, these lessons are to be consecutive and cumulative; that is, the lessons of each succeeding age-group are to presuppose the nurture afforded by those of the preceding groups.

"4. These lessons are to be dated, thus making possible every three years, in the light of the experience of those using them.

"5. These lessons are to be predominantly biblical; that is, they are to be selected, chiefly, from biblical materials; and, as a part of the moral and religious nurture which is their total purpose, they shall aim to impart a comprehensive knowledge of the Bible and to afford to the pupil the disposition and the ability to use God's Word intelligently."³⁰

The grading into groups is in keeping with the plan adopted in 1917³¹ by the Sunday School Council of Evangelical Denominations.

An examination of the lesson topics reveals the fact that the lessons, though they are better suited to the needs and interests of Primary and Junior children than are the ungraded Uniform Lessons issued by the Lesson Committee, they are still very remote from the pupils' life situations. Take, for example, the Primary Course for 1925. The fourth quarter is entitled "Thanking God For His Goodness." The lesson topics are "God's Promise in the Rainbow," "The Land God Gives Us," "Teaching

³⁰ *Group Uniform Series, Primary Course for 1925*, preface. Copy secured from the Secretary of the Lesson Committee.

³¹ Beginners 4-5; Primary 6-8; Juniors 9-11; Intermediate 12-14; Senior 15-17.

Children to Thank God," "Praying In God's House," "Praying by a Riverside," "Nehemiah Prays to God," "Building the City Wall," "All the People Thanking God," "Praising God in Prison."

The fact that for each age-group there is a definite aim is a decided advance over the *International Lessons*. The series is supposed to be child-centered, but, since the Bible is regarded as basic rather than illustrative, it is very unlikely that the ideal of the series can be maintained. However, when a lesson series attempts to select and utilize materials from modern sources, this may be considered an indication, at least, that that series is seeking to provide a curriculum more nearly adapted to the needs and problems of the pupils.

CURRENT GRADED CURRICULA: DENOMINATIONAL

We shall next give attention to a group of leading courses prepared by the several denominations.

The Beacon Course. This series has been created for use by the Unitarian Association.

(1) *Origin.* William I. Lawrence has been the moving spirit in the *Beacon Course*. In 1910 he became president of the Unitarian Sunday School Society and in 1912 effected a reorganization in such manner that a department of religious education was established in connection with the American Unitarian Association. The Department of Religious Education took over the executive functions of the Sunday School Society and made plans to prepare a comprehensive curriculum for the Sunday school. Doctor Lawrence was assisted by Dr. Florence Buck as associate editor, and Dr. Edwin D. Starbuck as an adviser. Later, Dr. Luther A. Weigle rendered valuable assistance in the criticism of the manuscripts before their publication.³²

(2) *General description of the Beacon Course.* The course of study is intended to be definitely child-centered. The Beacon Press announces that "the primary aim is not to store the memory or to get something taught, but to guide the developing lives safely through besetting dangers and lead them on to a genuine Christian manhood and womanhood. It is carefully graded,

³² History of the *Beacon Series* as given out by the American Unitarian Association, 1921.

year by year, in accordance with moral and spiritual needs as well as intellectual aptitudes and limitations. Each stage of the growing life is treated as a period requiring peculiar help and also as a time of preparation for later experiences. The goal of a normally developed religious maturity is ever kept in view."³³

The course provides expressional work for all children up to and including the thirteenth year, according to the theory which seeks (1) to make the expressional work in every case subordinate to and illustrative of the lessons with which it is given, (2) to make the work very simple at the beginning, bearing in mind the pupil's lack of skill, and (3) to make it steadily progressive and always artistic. The makers of this series regard hand work and expressional work as auxiliary and illustrative of the lesson and do not desire it to be used as "busy work."

The books in the early part of the course are for teachers only, the children being supplied with leaflets and hand work. For the middle grades books and expressional work for the pupils as well as manuals for the teachers are provided. In the advanced grades the books are prepared specifically for the pupils.

The mechanical features are excellent. The units are in book form, divided into chapters instead of into lessons. The binding, print, paper, legibility, and durability, are all to be commended. There is an evident attempt to make the material attractive as well as serviceable.

(3) *Content of the course.* The Beacon lessons make great use of the Bible, being largely, though not wholly, biblical.³⁴ The extra-biblical stories of nature and life are linked with biblical passages for illustration. For example, in *God's Wonderworld*, by C. S. Cobb, for age nine, lesson three is entitled, "Blossoming Plants." The memory verse for the lesson is "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow, they toil not, neither do they spin; yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God doth so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you?"

³³ *The Beacon Course in Religious Education*, 1924, foreword, Beacon Press.

³⁴ Statement by the Beacon Press in their announcement of courses, 1924, foreword.

(Matthew 6.28-30.)³⁵ The attempt is clearly made here to correlate nature with a biblical and religious truth. In this sense the Beacon Press can announce the series as largely biblical. Doctor Lawrence, the editor, makes this definite: "Thus it appears from a study of the books so far in use (1921) that whereas about fifty per cent of the entire material is fundamentally biblical, nearly 100 per cent of the course is biblical, since the lessons are constantly referring to biblical passages for illustration and reinforcement."³⁶ However, according to Doctor Crawford's study, the distribution of material in the Beacon Course is somewhat different from that described in the previous statement. His calculations are as follows: 10.6 per cent biblical, 28.8 per cent quasi-biblical, and 60.6 per cent extra-biblical.³⁷ This variation is to be explained by the difference in the standards used.³⁸

The material in the *Beacon Course*, in its attempt to be life-centered, emphasizes service as one of the strong factors in promoting the kingdom of God. This point of view is noticeable in the titles of the course, "*Living Together*," "*Children of the Father*," "*Our Part in the World*."

The Christian Nurture Series. This course of studies has been prepared for the use of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

(1) *Origin.* The *International Lessons* had not been long in use before the leaders in the Protestant Episcopal Church felt that these lessons did not sufficiently emphasize the church year, and did not stress certain teachings concerning the church that they desired their children to receive. This dissatisfaction caused the Episcopalians to devise lessons of their own, now known as the *Christian Nurture Series*.

Dr. William E. Gardner, in co-operation with Dr. Lester Bradner, has been the chief promoter of the *Christian Nurture Series*. Previous to 1912 Doctor Gardner had been stimulating interest in a better course of study for Episcopal Sunday schools.

³⁵ Cobb, C. S., *God's Wonderworld*, Lesson 3.

³⁶ Personal letter from Doctor Lawrence to Dr. George H. Betts.

³⁷ Crawford, Leonidas, *The Status and Evaluation of Extra-biblical Material in the Curriculum of Religious Education in the United States*, p. 146.

³⁸ See p. 289 of this study for Crawford's method.

He urged that a graded unit be prepared for each grade so that children and youth might be trained in the church life and in the Christian life in general.³⁹ In 1912 Dr. Lester Bradner, associated with Dr. William E. Gardner, began the work of directing the various units of the series. When a unit was completed, it was carefully criticized by an advisory commission and carefully tested in a Sunday school known to members of the commission. This method of experimentation and testing went on until 1916, when the Morehouse Publishing Company (Milwaukee) placed the *Series* at the disposal of the Episcopal Church.⁴⁰ The editors plan to revise the textbooks in the series once every five years. The first revision began in 1923.⁴¹

(2) *General description of the course.* The *Christian Nurture Series* is built on a five-fold foundation:

- (1) The story of epic element, tradition, etc. (Information.)
- (2) The subconscious development which goes on when words and phrases, freighted with association that move one to the depths, are made the possession of the mind and soul (Memory).
- (3) The association of one with others for the accomplishment of great tasks, and the losing of one's self-consciousness in a great cause (Loyalty).
- (4) The talking with the highest that one knows (Devotion).
- (5) The leaving the world better because one has lived (Social Service).⁴²

These factors are considered to be the nurturing forces of the Christian life. Each unit of the series or text is built on this foundation, with each lesson emphasizing some aspect of each of the five concepts. The editors endeavored to prepare the course in keeping with the church year and with ecclesiastical emphases. Their program of religious education for children was quite in keeping with the great emphasis which all Episcopalians place on the church as an institution.

The *Christian Nurture Series* does not attempt to favor extremes in the Episcopal Church, either high or low church. The editors have striven to preserve and pass on all those elements in the church's ecclesiastical life that have value to the largest number of people.⁴³

³⁹ Gardner, William E., Personal correspondence with Dr. George H. Betts, 1923.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*

The purposes and the methods of the series have elements both of strength and weakness. Perhaps its strongest point of emphasis is upon institutional religion. In this emphasis lies the danger that a procedure in ritual or an institutional attitude of mind may make religion too rigid and mechanical. To avoid this danger great responsibility devolves upon the teachers.

The textbooks are well provided with supplemental materials, such as correlated readings, drills, notebook work, assignments for the following week, and Bible readings covering the next lesson. The youngest children are provided with leaflets and pictures. The units throughout all the elementary grades are provided with letters to parents, suggesting that the parents read or tell certain stories, and see that the children learn the specified materials. The mechanical features of the texts do not reach best modern standards. The print is crowded, and much too small.

(3) *Types of material used.* The *Christian Nurture Series* covers a broad range of material, including biography, Bible stories, missionary stories, selections from literature and realistic incidents, the Creed, and the catechism. In the Kindergarten years, of ninety stories, seventy-six are biblical, with the others taken from nature, literature, and biography. Taking the series as a whole, Doctor Crawford concludes that as the course was given in 1922, 32 per cent was biblical, 38 per cent quasi-biblical, and 30 per cent extra-biblical.⁴⁴

The Lutheran Graded Series. The antecedents of the present *Lutheran Graded Series* go back into the last century.

(1) *Origin.* In the year 1866 the Lutheran Convention instructed its Sunday School Committee to report on a graded system of instruction for the Sunday schools, and the committee was urged the following year to draw up plans for a graded system. In 1888 the Sunday School Committee made a report to the convention in which it presented a graded plan. However, the convention did not take action on the report. By the year 1893 a stronger movement for graded material was evi-

⁴⁴ Crawford, L. W., *Status and Evaluation of Extra-biblical Material in the Curriculum of Religious Education in the United States*, p. 140.

dent, which resulted in the present graded series. The convention adopted the report of the committee for a graded system and instructed the Committee to prepare lessons for the years 1895 and 1896 on the Church Gospels and on the poetical and prophetic books of the Old Testament. The Convention of 1895 authorized the preparation of further units, and the Convention of 1897 voted for the continuation of the preparation of the graded textbooks at the rate of one volume a year. From this point on the *Lutheran Graded Series* developed to its present form.

(2) *General description of the Lutheran Series.* The minutes of the Lutheran Convention of 1899 give something of the point of view of the series. According to this announcement, "the lessons provide a steady progress of method as well as in grade, which are in keeping with the normal development of the child mind. The lessons are of such a nature that they may interlink with the work of the parish school, the public school, and the Sunday school. The system expects every child to attend catechetical instruction when a certain grade is reached and that not more than a year after confirmation the classes are to be readjusted. Those scholars who are sufficiently gifted to become a part of the teaching forces of the schools should be put either into the normal or missionary class at this period before the enthusiasm and the devotion at this time of confirmation has worn away."

The *Lutheran Graded Series* emphasizes loyalty to the principles of the church. An attempt is made to create a distinct denominational consciousness. For example, the Lutheran principle of baptismal regeneration actually has a place in the lessons. The *Lutheran Graded Series*, like the *Christian Nurture Series*, is built around the church year. As far back as 1875 the *Lesson Leaves* reveal this tendency. Provision for teacher training is an integral part of the plan. The minutes of the Convention of 1899 emphasize the fact that training courses should be made available for those who feel a desire to become teachers.

The *Lutheran Graded Series* takes a definite stand on certain elements of faith. The Bible is very clearly regarded as the

“Word of God” and, therefore, a certain source of authority. The words of the Bible are regarded as being given by inspiration of God. God is clearly set forth in trinitarian aspects (three in one, or as a tri-personality). Jesus is regarded as having been pre-existent, and as having come to earth at the will of God to become the Saviour of men.

The course places great emphasis upon the acquisition of knowledge in terms of theology and biblical facts. One develops the impression that the child is not the center of this series, since such an emphasis is placed upon information.

(3) *Types of material used.* The *Lutheran Graded Series* uses for the most part biblical material. There is an evident desire to store the mind of the pupil with the knowledge of the Scriptures. The mere titles of the courses would seem to indicate this tendency—*Bible Story, Bible History, Bible Geography, Bible Teachings, Bible Literature, Scripture Lesson Division*. The chief purpose of the series seems to be to get the pupils to master the contents of the Bible as an end in itself rather than as a guide in Christian living. The preponderance of biblical and theological concepts in the series is responsible for the shortage of material from church history, the great missionary enterprises, and the pressing social problems of the present. The emphasis on biblical material seems to leave little or no room for social service projects, or for the use of worship materials.

The Westminster Series of Departmental Graded Lessons. This series was prepared for use in the Presbyterian Church Schools.

(1) *Origin.* The Presbyterian Church has thought it best to modify the *International Graded Series* because of certain limitations in the graded course. The *Graded Lessons* were issued as an experiment and the departmental modification is but a further step in the attempt to secure a better system.

The small Sunday school found some difficulty in making adjustments in grading, so that the closely graded lessons might be introduced. They were handicapped by the lack of teachers and by the meager buildings and equipment. On the other hand, there were certain large schools that had difficulty in using

the rather complex Closely Graded Course. As a result of this situation not a few of the large schools reverted to the old Uniform Lessons.⁴⁵ Because of these difficulties, there arose a demand for a system that would be simple but which would at the same time conserve the idea of grading.

To meet this situation the Presbyterian Church planned the *Departmental Graded Lessons*. In 1915 lessons were issued for Beginners, Primary, and Junior ages corresponding to the lessons of the first-year Beginners, first-year Primary, and first-year Junior of the Closely Graded Course. In 1916 lessons were issued which corresponded to the second-year Beginners, the second-year Primary, and the second-year Junior. In 1917 the lessons issued corresponded to the first-year Beginners, the third-year Primary and the third-year Junior. Intermediate Departmental Lessons corresponding to the fourth-year Junior were issued to begin with October, 1917. Senior Departmental Lessons corresponding to the third-year Intermediate and electives for the Young People's Department and the lessons for the Adult Division were issued beginning with October 1918.⁴⁶

(2) *General description of the Departmental Graded Lessons.* This course is based on four principles:

"First. Both the religious needs of the child and the fundamental aim of revealed Scripture must be brought together if the best results are to be realized. Neither can be sacrificed. The old Uniform system does not fully recognize either. The new Departmental system recognizes both.

"Second. The religious nature develops by periods of about three years each. . . . Within these three-year periods, close sequence of lesson material is not necessary as it is in teaching arithmetic or Latin, hence the lesson materials may be presented in Cycles using one lesson at a time for the whole department, providing the department does not cover more than the three-year period. This is the plan of the Departmental Lessons, namely, one lesson at a time for each department.

⁴⁵ *The Departmental Graded Lessons*, pp. 5-6. This is a pamphlet issued by the Presbyterian Publishing House.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

"Third. Within these periods of development there are very marked individual differences. Children cannot be catalogued and graded by years. They should be grouped within the department according to their individual needs. . . . The new Departmental Lessons recognize this principle and many suggestions are made to teachers.

"Fourth. In order to be efficient, a system of lessons must be capable of practical adaptation to the largest possible number of schools. Practical difficulties such as the problem of substitute teachers and lack of separate rooms must be reduced to the minimum in order that the whole can be lifted toward the ideal. . . . The Departmental System can be adapted to the smallest school or it can be adjusted to a large, highly organized school."⁴⁷

It is very evident from the statement of principles that the *Departmental Lessons* are arranged for periods of three years and that emphasis upon progression refers to the relation between the departments and not within the department. The lessons themselves are based upon the *International Graded Lessons*, or perhaps it would be better to say that the *Departmental Lessons* are a modification and adaptation of the Closely Graded Series. Instead of three lessons being studied within the Primary Department, as would be the case with the Closely Graded Series, only one lesson is used by the classes within a department.

"In the Children's and Young People's Division, the helps for both teacher and pupil are issued in quarterly form, each lesson being dated for a particular Sunday. They are used only once. Each quarter there is fresh material on new lessons, so that the entire course will be covered in the allotted number of years; but the material for three years will be offered for successive use instead of for simultaneous use. . . . In a school thus organized, at no time will more than seven lessons be necessary, for it is a part of the departmental plan that but one lesson at a time shall be taught in the department, and this lesson issued for that particular Sunday."⁴⁸

The *Departmental Lessons* are issued in periodical form with

⁴⁷ *The Why and the How*, p. 4, Presbyterian Board of Christian Education.

⁴⁸ *The Westminster Departmental Graded Lessons*, 1923-1924.

the usual paper bindings. One would not expect that these lessons would engender interest and respect in the pupils for the materials of religious instruction.

(3) *Types of material used.* The *Departmental Lessons* are biblical. A glance over the departmental aims would be sufficient to convince one of that fact. The Beginner's Course undertakes to help the little child to know and love God as the loving heavenly Father and Jesus Christ as the Friend and Saviour of little children. In the outline of the course for 1923-1925, there are only two lessons which are not taken directly from the Bible or based on biblical passages as a background.⁴⁹ In the Primary Course for 1923-1926 all the lessons are selected from the Bible. One of the aims of the Junior Department is to awaken in the pupil a love for the Bible, and all the lessons for the Cycle 1923-1926 are from the Bible or about the Bible with the exception of about half a dozen missionary stories. One of the aims of the Senior Course is to awaken in the pupils an appreciation of the Bible as a revelation of God's character and as the inspired guide in all matters of faith and practice. In both the Intermediate and Senior groups the lessons in the Cycle 1923-1926 are largely taken from the Bible or have to do in some way with the Scriptures. For example, in the Intermediate Department the theme of the lessons for July, August, and September, 1925, is "The Bible" and some of the individual topics are as follows: "The Old Testament and Its Books," "The New Testament and Its Books," "The Story of the English Bible," "The Bible in America," "The Bible in Africa," and "The Bible for the Whole World." The quarter for April, May, and June, 1925, is entitled "Later Christian Leaders"; and, with the exception of these two quarters, all the other lessons are about biblical characters and incidents, or are based upon the Bible as a foundation (such as "The Good Citizen," Nehemiah 1.1-4; "Living For Christ," Matthew 4.18, and the like). The same general conclusions can be drawn concerning the Senior Course for the Cycle 1923-1926.

The *Departmental Lessons* are material-centered. In theory

⁴⁹ *The Westminster Departmental Graded Lessons, 1923-1924.*

they aim to place the pupil first, but in actual practice it appears to one who examines the lessons that the biblical material is too greatly emphasized. On an examination of the lesson topics for the younger ages, particularly, one feels that there is undue effort to present biblical material regardless of whether or not it is the material best suited to the needs of the pupil at that particular age.

The Westminster Textbooks of Religious Education. This series was prepared for use in the Presbyterian church schools, and represents the attempt at correlating the Sunday and week-day educational program of the church. For this reason it seems desirable to consider this series in some detail. Strictly speaking, this series is neither a Sunday-school curriculum nor a week-day church-school series, for the reason that it is meant to include both.

The plan described. The object of the series may be summarized as follows:

1. The plan seeks to meet the needs of those churches which desire to correlate their educational program.

2. It seeks to correlate the informational, devotional, and expressional phases of religious education so as to avoid duplication along these lines.

3. There is an attempt to provide suitable opportunity for expression so that the information gained will not fail to register in conduct.

4. It seeks to provide better material than that which has been used previously so as to satisfy those churches which are seeking higher educational standards in their course of study.⁵⁰

The series is planned to meet the needs of church schools having a week-day session, a Sunday session, and another meeting for expression which may meet either on Sunday or on a week-day. In the general statement as to the purpose and plan of the course the editor⁵¹ says: "The lessons are so arranged, however, that the week-day session is mainly informational, the

⁵⁰ These statements of purpose are to be found in Squires, Walter A., *God Revealing His Truth Through Patriarch and Prophet*, preface, Part I.

⁵¹ John T. Paris.

Sunday session more largely devotional, and the third session of the week largely expressional.”⁵²

The series is designed for pupils of Primary, Junior, and Intermediate grades, and each unit provides forty-two lessons of three sections (two sections for primary grades). It is not the plan to furnish materials for a year of fifty-two Sundays, but, rather, to make the lessons correspond in time to the public school year. The editor suggests to those Sunday schools which have a summer schedule that they review the work covered in the regular year.

The series throughout is almost entirely biblical. This is true in the Primary grades, where one might expect other than biblical stories to be used, such as nature stories, and in the Intermediate Department, where one might expect the lesson writers to secure materials from sources other than biblical. An excerpt from Lesson I, Intermediate Department, first year, Part I, presents the point of view of the whole series in these words: “The Bible is to be our textbook in the Intermediate Department. We shall have other books, but they are to be only helps enabling us to understand the Bible better than we otherwise could do. As members of the Intermediate Department you have reached an age when you are able to understand much more of the Bible than you could as pupils in the Primary and Junior grades.”⁵³ In the two last-named grades the pupils are expected to become familiar with the biblical stories so that by the time they reach the Intermediate Department the Bible stories need not be presented as though for the first time but in order that their truth may be analyzed and illustrated.

Possible points of strength. The *Westminster Textbooks of Religious Education* possess several strong points:

1. There is an attempt to correlate the week-day and Sunday church-school work. How well the series will succeed in this remains to be proved. The editor recognizes the difficulty here on account of the usual separation in the organization and administration of Sunday and week-day classes, and suggests that

⁵² Squires, Walter A., *God Revealing His Truth Through Patriarch and Prophet*, preface, Part I.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

wherever possible the same teachers should have charge of the three sections.⁵⁴ However, regardless of the organization, this series contains material that may be used on both Sunday and week days. For example, Chapter VII of the course for the Intermediate Department, by Walter A. Squires, entitled *New Testament Followers of Jesus*, has as a lesson title, "Andrew, a Faithful Man of Average Ability." The topic for the week-day session is entitled "Two Brothers Who Helped One Another," and in this lesson Andrew is portrayed as an honest fisherman, a patriotic citizen, a resourceful man, and a friendly adviser who brought Peter to Jesus. The topic for the Sunday session is "Andrew, Simon Peter's Brother," and in this lesson Andrew is described as a helper to Peter, an eager learner in the school of Jesus. It is pointed out that, according to tradition, after the resurrection of Jesus, Andrew became a missionary to distant lands, bringing wild and barbarous men to Jesus. The topic for the expressional session is entitled "Christianity and the Race Problem in America." At first thought it might appear like a far cry from Andrew to the topic for the expressional session. In the first lesson the story of John G. Paton, a missionary to the South Sea Islands, is introduced, and in the Sunday lesson the story is told of a woman winning a Negro convict for Christ. With these instances as a background the author suggests in the expressional lesson that Andrew, John G. Paton, and the woman who helped to convert the Negro convict had transcended race prejudice to bring men and women to the fullness of Christ. The pupils are asked by the teacher to give a report on their study topics, which are suggested in the lesson, and the class makes an attempt to suggest ways by which they can render helpful service to people of another race. This gives some idea of how the series is undertaking to correlate the educational program of the church and thus avoid some of the present duplication found in many of our churches.

2. The series makes another attempt at unifying the local program by undertaking to relate the expressional session (form-

⁵⁴ A description of the *Westminster Textbooks of Religious Education* found in Squires, Walter A., *God Revealing His Truth Through Patriarch and Prophet*, preface.

erly the Junior and Intermediate Endeavor Societies) to the church school. These textbooks regard the religious education of the child as a unity, and for this reason they desire a unified organization as well as a unified curriculum.

3. In the Intermediate Department the pupils are asked to give consideration to such problems as child labor and the race problem. This is valuable in that it gives the pupils an opportunity to interpret such problems of the community in the light of Christian principles suggested in the lesson material.

4. Very good missionary stories are included in the course,⁵⁶ such as the story of John G. Paton⁵⁵ and "Doctor Luke of Labrador."⁵⁶

5. The review questions and study topics for the expressional session (particularly in the Intermediate Department) are of a very high order.

Limitations. The series shows the following limitations and defects:

1. The editor's statement describing the plan of textbooks would likely cause some teachers to take the position that on the week day they must be concerned with giving information, on Sunday they must give practically all of the time to securing a spirit of devotion, and in the expressional session they must place almost total emphasis upon having the pupils express what has been learned and felt. Though not explicitly stated by the editor, there is more or less of an attempt throughout these lessons to separate the informational, devotional, and expressional phases of the child's experience.

2. Too large a proportion of the material is biblical. In going over the entire series one continually has the feeling that the writers are striving to use the Bible as an end in itself rather than only one of the means to be employed in developing the Christian life of childhood and youth. True, extra-biblical material is used both in the week-day and Sunday sessions, but chiefly as supplementary to or illustrative of biblical material. At this point two sentences in the book entitled *New Testament Followers of Jesus*⁵⁷ present the point of view of the entire

⁵⁶ Squires, Walter A., *New Testament Followers of Jesus*, chap. vii.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, chap. xiii.

⁵⁷ The book was written by Walter A. Squires and is intended for the second year of the Intermediate Department.

series as follows: "The material for each week-day session contains some extra-biblical material, usually in the form of a missionary story. . . . The efficient teacher will find many more for use in the class and will seek to emphasize the Bible teaching by these modern illustrations of the Bible truth."⁵⁸

3. The treatment of the biblical material might be questioned. For example, one of the books⁵⁹ in the Junior Department contains stories from Genesis which have to do with the beginnings of life, our first parents, and early family relations among the Hebrews. The pupils will accept the accounts in Genesis as giving the method by which God made the world and created life, but when they come in their high-school course to study God's method as revealed by science, confusion will doubtless arise in their minds. In this connection the following passage from one of the week-day lessons in the Intermediate Department might be considered misleading: "The Bible tells us about ourselves. People who have no Bible are always asking: 'What are we? Whence have we come? Whither do we go?' People have given some strange answers to these questions. The Bible helps us to answer them correctly."⁶⁰

4. The textbooks fail to make use of the outstanding events in the school year—the opening of school, Thanksgiving, the Christmas season, the New Year, Easter, Spring festivals, and patriotic days. A commitment to a chronological study of a given section of the Bible does not lend itself readily to a consideration of special interests.

5. It is possible that the entire series may be criticized for offering too much informational material in the week-day and Sunday sessions, with a minimum of emphasis upon meeting the actual needs and life situations of the pupils.

THE GRADED CURRICULA AS A WHOLE

Aims of Graded Curricula. One of the distinctive advances of graded curricula over the former ungraded lessons is in

⁵⁸ Found in the suggestions to teachers concerning the week-day session, p. vi.

⁵⁹ Trout, Ethel W., *Stories of the Beginners*, first few lessons.

⁶⁰ Squires, Walter A., *God Revealing His Truth Through Patriarch and Prophet*, p. 5.

the matter of aims. The graded series state definite though perhaps not always attainable aims—an aim for the span of childhood and youth; specific aims for each age group, such as Primary and Junior; and an aim for individual lessons within the age group. The aims may be unsuited to the age, have little actual significance, or be poorly realized, but the very fact that an aim is made more explicit for the entire series and for the individual units, in itself is important.

An examination of the aims of the several curricula makes it very evident that all of the series, at least theoretically, place the child at the center. There is a recognition that the child with his needs, interests, and capacities should be focal in the program. Regardless of how far short the several series have fallen in their attempt to measure up to their ideal, the recognition that the child should have the central place is prophetic of further advance in curriculum making. A study of the lesson content reveals that placing the child first in many instances has been made secondary to subject matter and institutional emphasis. This is doubtless to be expected, since experience, training, and tradition had for so long emphasized knowledge as an end in itself.

Responsibility for issuing lessons. The responsibility for issuing the lessons (discussed in the preceding section) may be broadly indicated as follows:

- I. Lessons prepared from the outlines released by the International Lesson Committee.
 1. *International Closely Graded Lessons.*
 2. *Group Graded Lessons.*
- II. Lessons issued by denominational bodies from their own outlines:
 1. Lutheran Church.
 - (1) *The Lutheran Graded Series.*
 2. Unitarian Church.
 - (1) *The Beacon Course in Religious Education.*
 3. Protestant Episcopal Church.
 - (1) *The Christian Nurture Series.*
 4. Presbyterian Church.
 - The Departmental Graded Series.*
- III. Lessons prepared by independent agencies.
 1. *The Chicago Constructive Studies in Religion.*
 2. *The Scribners' Completely Graded Series.*

Lesson outlines issued by the International Lesson Committee may be utilized by any denomination or even by an independent publisher who cares to prepare lessons from them. At present the *International Graded Lessons* used by the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Congregational Church are issued by a syndicate representing the three churches, the Graded Press, New York.

The other churches which use the *International Graded Lessons* in whole or in part publish them with their own imprint. David C. Cook, of Elgin, Illinois, is an independent publisher preparing and issuing lessons from the outlines of the International Lesson Committee.

Form of the lesson units. For the most part the graded curricula, like the ungraded Uniform Lessons, are issued in periodical form, in paper binding. This is exceedingly unfortunate from the educational standpoint, but it has had decided advantages, nevertheless, in that Sunday schools, weak financially, are able to purchase the material in this form. A Sunday school is free to use the ungraded lessons or the graded whichever it may desire.⁶¹ One of the objections to the graded lessons is the expense involved in their use. The graded movement would have been retarded immeasurably if all graded lessons had been issued in book form.

Of the lessons referred to in this chapter, those which appear in periodical form with paper covers are:

1. *International Closely Graded Series.*
2. *The Westminster Series of Departmental Graded Lessons.*
3. *The International Group Graded Lessons.*
4. *Lutheran Graded Series.*

Those which appear in book form (cloth) are:

1. *The Chicago Constructive Studies in Religion.*
2. *The Beacon Course in Religious Education.*

Those which have no hard and fast standard as to form are:

1. *The Christian Nurture Series.*
2. *The Scribner's, Closely Graded Series.*

In the announcement of courses by Charles Scribner's Sons,

⁶¹ This is true in churches such as Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian and Congregational.

1924, it is stated that many of the units may be procured in quarterly form with paper cover, or complete in one volume bound in cloth. Certain units are listed as "complete in one volume, cloth." The announcement of courses by the Protestant Episcopal Church for the season 1924-1925 lists a number of teachers' manuals obtainable in either cloth or paper, but does not indicate that pupils' manuals are available bound in cloth. However, for age ten and above the pupils' manuals for the full year are listed. This, of course, is preferable to quarterly books.

Contents of the lesson courses. A study of the present graded curricula reveals the fact that many types of materials have been employed. Lessons have drawn from the Bible, nature, history, biography, literature, missionary incidents and stories, art, and music, constituting one of the distinctive differences between the graded curriculum and the former ungraded lessons. This is further evidence of the growing sentiment that the religious life may be expressed in many and various ways. It is an indication also that lesson writers regard extra-biblical material as well as the biblical as having value for the religious development of childhood and youth.

A study of the content of the several series, however, is very revealing. The makers of the series declare that the pupil is placed at the center of the lessons, but an examination of the lessons reveals a different situation. The lessons are largely fact, creed, or Bible-centered. Teachers' and pupils' manuals alike place much more emphasis upon the mastery of subject matter than upon life situations, projects in living, or expressional activities. Subject matter is made an end in itself.⁶² Such a great emphasis upon information leaves too little room for stressing attitudes and habits of conduct. Motivation is poorly provided for in most of the present curricula.

Method and helps. The present curriculum for the most part has eliminated the catechetical method, so prominent before the Uniform Lessons. No longer is the memory depended upon exclusively as it was in the early nineteenth century. It follows, however, that, if the present lessons are material-centered, the

⁶² See *The Journal of Religious Education*, April, 1925. Article by B. S. Winchester, pp. 147-150.

method will be largely expository. The expository method is valuable for explanation and clarification as an aid to the mastery of material, but this method should not be used to the exclusion or neglect of other desirable types of teaching that seek to help the pupils to meet intelligently and effectively the needs of their daily lives. The present lesson helps for the most part are too largely expository.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In the last two chapters of this study we have noted how certain forces brought about the creation of graded curricula, the dissatisfaction with the Uniform Lessons, changed conceptions concerning religion and the Bible, new advances in education and psychology, and the appearance of new organizations.

We have considered briefly the history, characteristics, and content of representative types in the present curriculum, to find that in some instances there is a strong institutional emphasis, in others emphasis upon the Bible and so-called fundamental elements of the faith, in still other instances a strong emphasis upon ethical and religious information as almost an end in itself.

We further noted that, for the most part, present lesson materials have been prepared and sponsored by the denominations themselves or by the help of the Lesson Committee, but that, in at least two instances, independent and nondenominational series have been placed in the field.⁶³

One distinctive advance in graded materials is the presence of aims and objectives—something not found in the Uniform Lessons. Theoretically, in the present series, the objective is the development of the fullest religious life of the child, but practically this goal has been greatly obscured by an undue emphasis on subject matter.

Yielding to a demand for inexpensive lessons, several series have, therefore, sacrificed the mechanical features of the various units. Graded lessons are still in the experimental stage. Investigation and experimentation will point the way to the preparation of more suitable materials. The editors of the

⁶³ The Chicago *Constructive Studies in Religion* and Charles Scribner's *Completely Graded Series*.

present series realize that perfection has not yet been achieved and have made provision for changes and revisions when these have seemed desirable and expedient.

Even though the present lessons represent but the initial stage of the graded movement, it is probably safe to say that these materials approximate a religious curriculum. In other words, it is now possible to use the term "curriculum" in the educational sense of the term. The graded series have definite comprehensive objectives not only for the series as a whole but for specific age groups and for the individual lessons. The individual units do not stand alone but bear a relationship in the series as a whole. The materials are drawn from many sources. It would seem, therefore, in view of the fact that there are definite aims emphasizing the needs of the child, and that the material, which is drawn from many sources, is arranged in text-book form, that we may properly call the graded lessons a curriculum.

It is very evident that the graded curricula have faults as well as points of excellence. On the whole, they represent a significant attempt to adapt religious instruction to childhood and youth. Many units are excellent, possessing a charming style, climaxes skillfully arranged, and evident scholarship combined with praiseworthy literary merit. In other units the style is heavy, literary merit lacking, and the child mind is seemingly forgotten. We need, of course, always to bear in mind that the present graded curricula are still in the experimental stage, and that many of the units are being rewritten to conform to recent discoveries in the fields of psychology and education. At any rate, graded lessons have been in use long enough to demonstrate their superiority over the ungraded, and the manifest interest in the curriculum, judged by the books being written on the subject,⁶⁴ is prophetic of still further achievements in curriculum making.

⁶⁴ Betts, George Herbert, *The Curriculum of Religious Education*, 1924. Shaver, Erwin L., *The Project Principle in Religious Education*, 1925. *The Theory of the Curriculum*, by the International Committee on Curriculum. Bower, William C., *The Curriculum of Religious Education*, 1925.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. FOWLE'S SCRIPTURE LESSONS: BEING A NEW SELECTION FROM THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS¹

1. The historical sections from the Old Testament in Part I were grouped under the following heads:

Creation of the World.	Abraham Offers Up Isaac.
Creation of Man.	History of Joseph.
Adam's Transgression.	Israelites Depart from Egypt.
Murder of Abel.	Joshua Succeeds Moses.
The Deluge.	David's Exhortation to Solomon.
Confusion of Tongues.	Solomon's Choice.
Call of Abraham.	Dedication of the Temple.
Separation of Abraham and Lot.	Daniel Preserved from the Lions.
Abraham Promised a Son.	Selections From the Book of Job.
Covenant Renewed with Abraham.	Selections From the Book of Psalms.

2. The complete list of selections in Part II:

Of God.	Of Justice.
Of the Holy Scriptures.	Of Holiness.
Reconciliation to God by Christ.	Of the Poor and Afflicted.
Of Divine Worship.	Of Laziness.
The Ten Commandments.	Of Avarice.
The Duty of Parents toward their Children.	Of Pride and Humility.
Duties of Masters and Servants.	Of Drunkenness.
Of our Duty to Magistrates.	Of the Punishment of the Wicked.
Of Evil Speaking and False Reports.	Reward of Righteous.
Of Anger and Malice.	Reverence of God.
	Love to God and Man.

3. The selections contained in Part III are:

Birth and Infancy of Jesus Christ.	Danger of Riches.
The Ministry of Our Lord.	The Woman of Samaria.
Sermon on the Mount.	Mary's Good Choice.
Twelve Apostles Called.	Christ Justifies his Doctrine.
Little Children Brought to Christ.	Christ the Light of the World.
Necessity of Humility.	Lamentation over Jerusalem.
Offering of the Poor Widow.	Miracles.
Pardon of the Penitent Woman. ¹	Parables.
Pardon of Injuries.	Suffering of our Lord.

¹ See text, page 140.

Gift of Languages.
 Lame Man Cured.
 Peter and John Imprisoned.
 Deliverance of the Apostles.
 Stephen Stoned to Death.
 The Ethiopian Converted by Philip.

Paul Converted.
 Gospel Preached to Gentiles.
 Paul Preaches at Athens.
 Paul's Defense before Felix.
 Paul's Apology before Agrippa.
 Paul's Voyage and Shipwreck.
 Of the Last Judgment.

APPENDIX B. THE TWO-YEAR PLAN OF "SELECTED LESSONS"
 PREPARED BY THE AMERICAN SUNDAY
 SCHOOL UNION. 1825-1826²

Selected Lessons for One Year

Lesson	Subject
1. John 1: 1-14	Divinity of Christ.
2. Matthew 1: 1-17	Genealogy of Christ.
3. Luke 3: 23-38	Genealogy of Christ.
4. Luke 1: 1-23	Appearance of the angel to Zacharias.
5. Luke 1: 26-38	Annunciation to Mary.
6. Luke 2: 1-20	Mary going to Bethlehem and birth of Christ.
7. Luke 2: 21-38	Dedication of Christ at the Temple.
8. Matthew 2: 1-23	Wise men seeking Christ.
9. Luke 2: 41-52	Taken to Jerusalem at 12 years of age.
10. Matthew 3: 1-17	Preaching of John and Baptism of Christ.
11. Matthew 4: 1-11	Christ's temptation in the wilderness.
12. John 1: 15-34	Testimony of John to Christ's Messiahship.
13. John 1: 35-51	Calling of part of his disciples.
14. John 2: 1-11	Christ's first miracle at Cana.
15. John 2: 12-22	Goes to Jerusalem and cleanses the Temple.
16. John 3: 1-21	Christ's conversation with Nicodemus and some of John's sayings.
17. Matthew 4: 12-24	The calling of the disciples.
18. Luke 4: 16-32	Christ preacheth in Nazareth, from Isaiah, for which the Jews endeavor to throw him from a precipice.
19. Luke 6: 12-29	Choosing of the apostles and Sermon on the Mount.
20. Luke 6: 30-49	Continuation of the Sermon.
21. Luke 7: 1-10	Healing of the centurion's servant.
22. Luke 10: 14-26	Christ accused of casting out devils by Beelzebub, and his reply to them.
23. Matthew 8: 18-34	A scribe proposes to become his follower—Christ's answer—He calms a tempest.
24. Matthew 10: 1-18	The apostles sent out.
25. Matthew 11: 1-15	John, from the prison, sends two disciples to inquire whether he is the Messiah.
26. Mark 6: 14-29	An account of the beheading of John.
27. Matthew 16: 13-28	Christ asks his disciples whom they suppose him to be—Peter's answer. He foretells his death.

² See text, p. 145.

Lesson	Subject
28. Matthew 17: 1-13	Christ's transfiguration.
29. Matthew 18: 20-35	Peter's question, how often he should forgive his brother—Christ's instruction about brotherly love.
30. Luke 11: 1-13	Christ teacheth to pray.
31. Luke 13: 1-9	Christ preacheth repentance.
32. Matthew 19: 13-26	Christ blesseth little children. The rich man's question, what he should do to be saved.
33. John 11: 1-27	Christ goes to Bethany to raise Lazarus.
34. John 11: 28-46	Lazarus is raised.
35. John 11: 47-57	For which the Jews take counsel to kill him.
36. Mark 11: 1-11	Christ's entry into Jerusalem.
37. Matthew 26: 6-16	Mary anointeth Christ.
38. Matthew 26: 17-35	Christ foretelleth his being betrayed, and institutes the Lord's Supper.
39. Matthew 26: 36-56	Christ's agony in the Garden of Gethsemane.
40. Matthew 27: 1-10	Christ before Pilate; and death of Judas.
41. Matthew 27: 1-32	Christ's condemnation.
42. Matthew 27: 33-56	His crucifixion.
43. Matthew 27: 57-66	Christ's burial—the Jews set a watch.
44. Matthew 28: 1-15	Mary goes to the sepulcher and hastens to tell Peter of Christ's resurrection.
45. John 20: 3-18	Peter goes to the sepulcher.
46. Luke 24: 13-35	Christ appears to two disciples, while going to Emmaus.
Luke 36: 49	Christ appears to eleven disciples, in the absence of Thomas.
47. John 20: 22-29	Christ appears to Thomas.
48. John 21: 1-24	Christ appears to the disciples when fishing.
49. Acts 1: 3-12	Christ's ascension.
John 20: 30-31	Christ's ascension. ³

THE SECOND YEAR'S COURSE

Lesson	Chapter	Gospel	Subject
50	4	Matthew 23-25	Sermon on the Mount.
	5	Matthew 1-10	Sermon on the Mount.
51	5	Matthew 11-26	Sermon on the Mount.
52	5	Matthew 27-37	Sermon on the Mount.
53	5	Matthew 38-48	Sermon on the Mount.
54	6	Matthew 1-15	Sermon on the Mount.
55	6	Matthew 16-34	Sermon on the Mount.
56	7	Matthew 1-14	Sermon on the Mount.
57	7	Matthew 15-29	Sermon on the Mount.
58	13	Matthew 1-17	Parable of the sower.
59	13	Matthew 24-43	Parable on the tares in the field, and of the sower.
60	13	Matthew 44-58	Parable of the treasure, pearl and net.
61	21	Matthew 1-16	Parable of the laborers in the vineyard.

Lesson	Chapter	Gospel	Subject
62	21	Matthew 28-45	Parable of the two sons and the wicked husbandman.
63	22	Matthew 1-14	Parable of the wedding garment.
64	24	Matthew 42-51	Parable of the evil and oppressive servant.
65	25	Matthew 1-13	Ten wise and ten foolish virgins (Parable of).
66	25	Matthew 14-30	Parable of the talents.
67	4	Mark 21-29	Parable of the springing seed.
68	13	Mark 6-9	Parable of the barren fig tree.
69	10	Mark 25-37	Parable of the good Samaritan.
70	11	Mark 14-26	Parable of the house swept and garnished.
71	12	Mark 13-31	Parable of the covetous rich fool.
72	12	Mark 35-48	Parable of the faithful and wise stewards.
73	14	Luke 12-24	Parable of the great supper.
74	15	Luke 1-11	Parable of the lost sheep.
75	15	Luke 12-32	Parable of the prodigal son.
76	16	Luke 1-14	Parable of the unjust steward.
77	16	Luke 19-31	Parable of the rich man and Lazarus.
78	18	Luke 1-14	Parable of the importunate widow, and the Pharisee and publican.
79	10	John 1-18	Parable of the true shepherd.
80	15	John 1-11	Parable of the vine.
81	17	Luke 20-37	Christ speaketh of the destruction of Jerusalem.
82	21	Luke 5-19	Christ speaketh of the destruction of Jerusalem.
83	21	Luke 20-38	Christ speaketh of the destruction of Jerusalem.
84	5	John 19-29	Christ teacheth concerning the resurrection and judgment.
85	25	Matthew 31-46	Christ speaketh of the last judgment. ⁴

APPENDIX C.—JUDSON QUESTIONS—TEN QUESTIONS FROM EACH OF THREE TYPICAL "EXAMPLES"⁵

LESSON XIX

Matthew, Chapter X. Verses 1-18. *Jesus instructs the twelve Apostles and sends them forth to preach*

Example I

Whom did Jesus call to him?

What did he give them?

What did he give them power to do?

What were the names of these twelve apostles?

Did Jesus send them forth?

⁴ *Tenth Annual Report of the New York Sunday School Union, 1826, pp. 37-38.*

⁵ See text, p. 155.

Into whose way did he command them not to go?
 Into whose city did he command them not to enter?
 To whom should they rather go?
 What did he command them to do as they were going?
 In preaching what must they say?

Example II

Why did Christ call to him his twelve disciples?
 Those who were possessed with devils or unclean spirits, had at the same time diseases. What were the disciples to do before they healed these persons?
 What does the name of Peter signify?
 Ans. A rock.
 Matthew was called a publican—what was it to be a publican?
 Why was Simon called the Canaanite?
 From whence did Judas have the name Iscariot?
 Ans. From the name of his country, which was called Carioth.
 What is meant by his betraying Christ?
 Why were they directed not to go to the Gentiles?
 In what part of Palestine did the Samaritans dwell?
 Who were meant by the “lost sheep” of the house of Israel?

Example III

Mark III. 13 Where was Jesus when he called to him the twelve apostles?
 Mark VI. 7 Did he send out each apostle alone, or was he to have one to go with him?
 Christ called these apostles to preach—should any men become ministers if they be not called of him?
 Mark III. 17 Why did he give them the power of working miracles?
 What surname is given to James and John?
 Why were they called “the sons of thunder”?
 What can you tell about Judas Iscariot?
 The apostles were directed to go first to the lost sheep of the house of Israel—are there any other passages which represent sinners as being lost sheep?
 Isa. LIII. 6 What is it to be lost?
 How do you know that there are lost sinners in every land?⁶

APPENDIX D. THE TRIAL LIST OF 1872⁷*First Quarter.* JESUS AFTER THE ASCENSION

Lesson I	The Exalted Saviour	Acts II, 32-41.
Lesson II	The Great High Priest	Heb. IV, 11-16.
Lesson III	The All-Sufficient Lord	2 Cor. XII, 1-10.
Lesson IV	The Glorified Son of Man	Rev. I, 12-20.
Lesson V	To the Church of Ephesus	Rev. II, 1-7.

⁶ Judson, Albert, *A Series of Questions on the Selected Scripture Lessons for Sunday Schools*, p. 70.

⁷ See text, p. 233.

Lesson VI	Smyrna and Pergamos	Rev. II, 8-17.
Lesson VII	To the Church of Sardis	Rev. III, 1-6.
Lesson VIII	To the Church of Philadelphia	Rev. III, 7-13.
Lesson IX	To the Church of Laodicea	Rev. III, 14-22.
Lesson X	The Sealed Book	Rev. V, 1-14.
Lesson XI	The Lamb on the Throne	Rev. VII, 9-17.
Lesson XII	Alpha and Omega	Rev. XXII, 10-17.

Second Quarter. ELISHA, ISRAEL, AND JUDAH

Lesson I	The Mantle of Elijah	2 Kings II, 9-15.
Lesson II	Life and Death	2 Kings II, 19-25.
Lesson III	The Widow's Oil Increased	2 Kings IV, 1-7.
Lesson IV	Is It Well with the Child?	2 Kings IV, 18-30.
Lesson V	The Boy Restored to Life	2 Kings IV, 31-37.
Lesson VI	The Little Captive	2 Kings V, 1-7.
Lesson VII	The Leper Healed	2 Kings V, 8-14.
Lesson VIII	Gehazi's Sin	2 Kings V, 20-27.
Lesson IX	Elisha's Defenders	2 Kings VI, 8-13.
Lesson X	God's Deliverance	2 Kings VII, 1-11.
Lesson XI	Hezekiah's Prayer	2 Kings XX, 1-11.
Lesson XII	Judah Carried Captive	2 Kings XXIV, 10-16.

Third Quarter. TWELVE LESSONS FROM THE EPISTLES

Lesson I	Peace with God	Rom. V, 1-10.
Lesson II	The Contract	Rom. VIII, 6-18.
Lesson III	Faith in Christ	Rom. X, 4-13.
Lesson IV	The Reasonable Service	Rom. XII, 1-8.
Lesson V	Christian Living	Rom. XII, 9-21.
Lesson VI	Love Fulfilling the Law	Rom. XIII, 8-14.
Lesson VII	Accountability to God	Rom. XIV, 7-13.
Lesson VIII	Help One Another	Rom. XV, 1-7.
Lesson IX	The Cross	1 Cor. I, 18-25.
Lesson X	Husbandman and Builders	1 Cor. III, 6-15.
Lesson XI	The Temple of God	1 Cor. XIII, 1-13.
Lesson XII	Charity the Greatest	1 Cor. XIII, 1-13.

Fourth Quarter. TWELVE LESSONS ON DANIEL

Lesson I	The Captives of Babylon	Psa. CXXXVII, 1-9.
Lesson II	Daniel's Temperance Society	Dan. I, 8-17.
Lesson III	The Furious King	Dan. II, 10-19.
Lesson IV	The Interpreter	Dan. II, 27-35.
Lesson V	The Brave Young Men	Dan. III, 13-18.
Lesson VI	The Young Men in the Fire	Dan. III, 19-26.
Lesson VII	The Outcast King	Dan. IV, 26-33.
Lesson VIII	The Handwriting on the Wall	Dan. V, 22-31.
Lesson IX	The Conspiracy	Dan. VI, 4-10.
Lesson X	In the Den of Lions	Dan. VI, 14-23.
Lesson XI	Prayer and Answer	Dan. IX, 16-23.
Lesson XII	Last Words of Daniel	Dan. XII, 1-12.

APPENDIX E. THE INTERNATIONAL UNIFORM
LESSONS BY CYCLES^a*Cycle 1, 1873—1879*

- 1873 January—March, Lessons in the Old Testament (Genesis).
April—September, Lessons in the New Testament (Matthew).
October—December, Lessons in the Old Testament (Genesis).
- 1874 January—March, Lessons in the Old Testament (Exodus).
April—June, Lessons in the Old Testament (Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy).
July—December, Lessons in the New Testament (Mark).
- 1875 January—June, Lessons in the Old Testament (Joshua, Judges, 1 Samuel).
July—December, Lessons in the New Testament (John).
- 1876 January—March, Lessons in the Old Testament (1 and 2 Samuel).
Saul's Rejection to Absalom's Death.
April—June, Lessons in the New Testament (Acts).
July—September, Lessons in the Old Testament (1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Proverbs).
October—December, Lessons in the New Testament (Acts).
- 1877 January—June, Studies About the Kingdom of Israel (1 and 2 Kings, Amos, Hosea, Jonah, Nahum).
July—December, Studies in the Acts.
- 1878 January—June, Studies About the Kingdom of Judah (2 Chronicles, Jeremiah, Daniel).
July—December, Studies in Luke.
- 1879 January—March, Studies in the Old Testament (Ezra, Nehemiah, Psalms).
April—June, Studies in the Old Testament (Job, Isaiah, Micah, Joel, Ezekiel, Zechariah, Malachi).
July—December, Studies in the New Testament (Epistles, Hebrews, Revelation).

Cycle 2, 1880—1886

- 1880 January—June, Studies in the New Testament (Matthew).
July—December, Studies in the Old Testament (Genesis).
- 1881 January—June, Lessons in Luke.
July—December, Lessons in the Pentateuch.
- 1882 January—December, Studies in the Gospel according to Mark.
- 1883 January—June, Studies in the Acts of the Apostles.
July—December, Studies in the Old Testament (Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel).
- 1884 January—June, Studies in the Acts and the Epistles.
July—September, Three Months with David and the Psalms.
October—December, Three Months with Solomon and the Books of Wisdom.
- 1885 January—March, Studies in the Acts.
July—September, Studies in the Kings (1 and 2 Kings).
October—December, Studies in the Kings and Prophets,

^a See text, p. 237ff.

- 1886 January—March, Studies in Jewish History (2 Kings, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Malachi).

Cycle 3, 1887—1893

- 1887 January—June, Lessons in the Old Testament (Genesis, Exodus).
July—December, Studies in the Gospel According to Matthew.
- 1888 January—June, Studies in the New Testament (Matthew).
July—December, Studies in the Old Testament (Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth).
- 1889 January—June, Studies in Mark.
July—December, Studies in Jewish History (1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings).
- 1890 January—December, Studies in Luke.
- 1891 January—June, Studies in the Old Testament (1 Kings, 2 Kings, Jonah, Amos).
July—December, Studies in the Gospel of John.
- 1892 January—June, Studies in the Old Testament (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Psalms, Daniel).
July—December, Studies in the New Testament.
- 1893 January—March, Israel After the Captivity.
April—June, Old Testament Teachings.
July—September, Lessons from the Life of Paul.
October—December, Studies in the Epistles.

Cycle 4, 1894—1900

- 1894 January—June, Old Testament History (Genesis and Exodus).
July—December, Lessons from the Life of Our Lord.
- 1895 January—June, Lessons from the Life of Our Lord (Concluded).
July—December, Studies in Jewish History (Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel).
- 1896 January—June, Studies in the Gospel According to Luke.
July—December, Studies in Old Testament History (2 Samuel, 1 Kings, Proverbs).
- 1897 January—December, Studies in the Acts and the Epistles.
- 1898 January—June, Studies in the Gospel of Matthew.
July—September, Studies in the History of the Ten Tribes.
October—December, Studies in the History of Judah (2 Kings, 2 Chronicles, Isaiah, Jeremiah).
- 1899 January—June, Studies in the Gospel of John.
July—December, Studies in the Old Testament (Hosea, Daniel, Ezekiel, Ezra, Haggai, Zechariah, Psalms, Esther, Nehemiah, Malachi).
- 1900 January—December, Life and Teaching of Our Lord, Arranged from the Four Gospels.

Cycle 5, 1901—1906

- The fifth Cycle stressed the biographical element in the Bible.
- 1901 January—June, Life and Teachings of our Lord, Arranged from the Four Gospels (Concluded).
July—December, Studies in the Old Testament (Genesis and Exodus).
- 1902 January—June, Studies in the Book of Acts.

- July—December, Studies in the Old Testament from Moses to Samuel.
 1903 January—June, Studies in the Book of the Acts.
 July—December, Studies in the Old Testament from Samuel to Solomon.
 1904 January—June, Six Months with the Synoptic Gospels.
 July—September, Studies in the Old Testament from Solomon to Elijah.
 October—December, Studies in the Old Testament From Elijah to Isaiah.
 1905 January—June, Studies in the Writings of John (Miracles and Witnesses).
 July—December, Studies in the Old Testament (Isaiah to Malachi).
 1906 January—December, Words and Works of Jesus: Synoptic Gospels.

Cycle 6, 1907—1912

- 1907 January—December, Stories of the Patriarchs and Judges.
 1908 January—June, The Witness of the Fourth Gospel to Jesus.
 July—December, The United Kingdom.
 1909 January—December, Expansion of the Early Church.
 1910 January—December, The Gospel of the Kingdom.
 1911 January—December, Kings and Prophets of Judah and Israel.
 1912 January—December, Life of Christ.

Cycle 7, 1913—1917

- 1913 January—December, Creation to the Settlement in Canaan.
 1914 January—December, Life of Christ: Synoptic Gospels.
 1915 January—December, Judges to 2 Kings, with Prophets.
 1916 January—December, Acts, Epistles and Revelation.
 1917 January—June, John's Gospel.
 July—December, 2 Kings, Ezra and Nehemiah (with the Prophets).

Cycle 8, 1918—1925

- 1918 January—June, The Gospel of the Son of God (Studies in Mark).
 July—September, Studies in the Christian life.
 October—December, The Patriarchs and Early Leaders of Israel.
 1919 January—March, The Patriarchs and Early Leaders of Israel (Concluded).
 April—September, Some Great Teachings of the Bible.
 October—December, Studies in the Lives of Peter and John.
 1920 January—March, Studies in the Lives of Peter and John (Concluded).
 April—September, Early Leaders and Kings of Israel.
 October—December, The Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven.
 1921 January—March, The Gospel of the Kingdom (Concluded).
 April—June, Some Social Teachings of the Bible.
 July—December, Life and Letters of Paul.
 1922 January—September, Later Leaders and Prophets of Israel and Judah:
 From the Division of the Kingdom to the Close of the Old Testament.
 October—(March, 1923), Jesus the World's Saviour.
 1923 January—March, Jesus the World's Saviour (Concluded).
 April—September, Great Men and Women of the Bible.
 October—December, The Missionary Message of the Bible.
 1924 January—June, Outline of Old Testament History.
 July—December, The Life of Jesus (Harmony of the Gospels).
 1925 January—March, The Message of the Gospel According to John.
 April—December, The Spread of Christianity.

APPENDIX F. TABLES SHOWING DISTRIBUTION OF BIBLICAL MATERIALS IN THE INTERNATIONAL UNIFORM LESSONS⁹

TABLE I

The number of lessons in the International Uniform Series, selected from the several books of the Bible. (1873—1925.)

Genesis.....	152	Nahum.....	1
Exodus.....	82	Habakkuk.....	0
Leviticus.....	16	Zephaniah.....	0
Numbers.....	21	Haggai.....	2
Deuteronomy.....	11	Zechariah.....	5
Joshua.....	51	Malachi.....	9
Judges.....	25	Matthew.....	309
Ruth.....	9	Mark.....	230
I Samuel.....	96	Luke.....	279
II Samuel.....	44	John.....	218
I Kings.....	95	Acts.....	337
II Kings.....	83	Romans.....	37
I Chronicles.....	5	I Corinthians.....	40
II Chronicles.....	49	II Corinthians.....	10
Ezra.....	20	Galatians.....	9
Nehemiah.....	31	Ephesians.....	10
Esther.....	10	Philippians.....	9
Job.....	6	Colossians.....	3
Psalms.....	52	I Thessalonians.....	8
Proverbs.....	31	II Thessalonians.....	1
Ecclesiastes.....	5	I Timothy.....	2
Song of Solomon.....	0	II Timothy.....	8
Isaiah.....	58	Titus.....	2
Jeremiah.....	23	Philemon.....	1
Lamentations.....	0	Hebrews.....	11
Ezekiel.....	11	James.....	11
Daniel.....	48	I Peter.....	5
Hosea.....	8	II Peter.....	1
Joel.....	1	I John.....	7
Amos.....	8	II John.....	0
Obadiah.....	0	III John.....	0
Jonah.....	8	Jude.....	0
Micah.....	2	Revelation.....	31

⁹ See text, p. 248.

TABLE II

The books of the Bible ranked according to the number of lessons selected from each book (1873-1925).

Rank	Name of book	Number of lessons used	Rank	Name of book	Number of lessons used
1	Acts	337	35.5	Ruth	9
2	Matthew	309	35.5	Malachi	9
3	Luke	279	35.5	Galatians	9
4	Mark	230	35.5	Philippians	9
5	John	218	40	Hosea	8
6	Genesis	152	40	Amos	8
7	I Samuel	96	40	Jonah	8
8	I Kings	95	40	I Thessalonians	8
9	II Kings	83	40	II Timothy	8
10	Exodus	82	43	I John	7
11	Isaiah	58	44	Job	6
12	Psalms	52	46.5	I Chronicles	5
13	Joshua	51	46.5	Ecclesiastes	5
14	II Chronicles	49	46.5	Zechariah	5
15	Daniel	48	46.5	I Peter	5
16	II Samuel	44	49	Colossians	3
17	I Corinthians	40	52.5	Micah	2
18	Romans	37	52.5	Haggai	2
20	Nehemiah	31	52.5	I Timothy	2
20	Proverbs	31	52.5	Titus	2
20	Revelation	31	57	Joel	1
22	Judges	25	57	Nahum	1
23	Jeremiah	23	57	II Thessalonians	1
24	Numbers	21	57	Philemon	1
25	Ezra	20	57	II Peter	1
26	Leviticus	16	62.5	Song of Solomon	0
28.5	Deuteronomy	11	62.5	Lamentations	0
28.5	Ezekiel	11	62.5	Obadiah	0
28.5	Hebrews	11	62.5	Habakkuk	0
28.5	James	11	62.5	Zephaniah	0
32	Esther	10	62.5	II John	0
32	II Corinthians	10	62.5	III John	0
32	Ephesians	10	62.5	Jude	0

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TABLE III

The books of the Old Testament ranked according to the number of lessons selected from each book. (1873-1925.)

Rank	Name of book	Number of lessons used	Rank	Name of book	Number of lessons used
1	Genesis.....	152	21	Esther.....	10
2	I Samuel.....	96	22.5	Ruth.....	9
3	I Kings.....	95	22.5	Malachi.....	9
4	II Kings.....	83	24.5	Hosea.....	8
5	Exodus.....	82	24.5	Amos.....	8
6	Isaiah.....	58	24.5	Jonah.....	8
7	Psalms.....	52	27	Job.....	6
8	Joshua.....	51	28.5	I Chronicles.....	5
9	II Chronicles.....	49	28.5	Ecclesiastes.....	5
10	Daniel.....	48	28.5	Zechariah.....	5
11	II Samuel.....	44	31.5	Micah.....	2
12.5	Nehemiah.....	31	31.5	Haggai.....	2
12.5	Proverbs.....	31	33.5	Joel.....	1
14	Judges.....	25	33.5	Nahum.....	1
15	Jeremiah.....	23	37	Song of Solomon.....	0
16	Numbers.....	21	37	Lamentations.....	0
17	Ezra.....	20	37	Obadiah.....	0
18	Leviticus.....	16	37	Habakkuk.....	0
19.5	Deuteronomy.....	11	37	Zephaniah.....	0
19.5	Ezekiel.....	11			

TABLE IV

The books of the New Testament ranked according to the number of lessons selected from each book. (1873-1925.)

Rank	Name of book	Number of lessons used	Rank	Name of book	Number of lessons used
1	Acts.....	337	15.5	I Thessalonians.....	8
2	Matthew.....	309	15.5	II Timothy.....	8
3	Luke.....	279	17	I John.....	7
4	Mark.....	230	18	I Peter.....	5
5	John.....	218	19.	Colossians.....	3
6	I Corinthians.....	40	20.5	I Timothy.....	2
7	Romans.....	37	20.5	Titus.....	2
8	Revelation.....	31	23	II Thessalonians.....	1
9.5	Hebrews.....	11	23	Philemon.....	1
9.5	James.....	11	23	II Peter.....	1
11.5	II Corinthians.....	10	26	II John.....	0
11.5	Ephesians.....	10	26	III John.....	0
13.5	Galatians.....	9	26	Jude.....	0
13.5	Philippians.....	9			

TABLE V

The number of verses selected from the various books of the Bible in the *International Lessons*. (1873-1925.)

Name of book	Number of verses used	Name of book	Number of verses used
Genesis.....	2,497	Nahum.....	13
Exodus.....	1,864	Habakkuk.....	0
Leviticus.....	135	Zephaniah.....	1
Numbers.....	273	Haggai.....	9
Deuteronomy.....	98	Zechariah.....	24
Joshua.....	596	Malachi.....	51
Judges.....	683	Matthew.....	2,012
Ruth.....	116	Mark.....	1,519
I Samuel.....	2,245	Luke.....	2,558
II Samuel.....	1,670	John.....	1,489
I Kings.....	1,786	Acts.....	4,882
II Kings.....	1,327	Romans.....	186
I Chronicles.....	48	I Corinthians.....	305
II Chronicles.....	400	II Corinthians.....	85
Ezra.....	500	Galatians.....	62
Nehemiah.....	390	Ephesians.....	79
Esther.....	386	Philippians.....	170
Job.....	57	Colossians.....	27
Psalms.....	244	I Thessalonians.....	142
Proverbs.....	191	II Thessalonians.....	18
Ecclesiastes.....	39	I Timothy.....	23
Song of Solomon.....	0	II Timothy.....	71
Isaiah.....	408	Titus.....	24
Jeremiah.....	525	Philemon.....	25
Lamentations.....	0	Hebrews.....	139
Ezekiel.....	173	James.....	168
Daniel.....	283	I Peter.....	45
Hosea.....	248	II Peter.....	15
Joel.....	4	I John.....	43
Amos.....	201	II John.....	0
Obadiah.....	0	III John.....	0
Jonah.....	61	Judges.....	0
Micah.....	11	Revelation.....	154

TABLE VI

The books of the Bible ranked according to the verses selected in the *International Lessons*. (1873-1925.)

Rank	Name of book	Number of verses used	Rank	Name of book	Number of verses used
1	Acts.....	4,882	34	Leviticus.....	135
2	Luke.....	2,558	35	Ruth.....	116
3	Genesis.....	2,497	36	Deuteronomy.....	98
4	I Samuel.....	2,245	37	II Corinthians.....	85
5	Matthew.....	2,012	38	Ephesians.....	79
6	Exodus.....	1,864	39	II Timothy.....	71
7	I Kings.....	1,786	40	Galatians.....	62
8	II Samuel.....	1,670	41	Jonah.....	61
9	Mark.....	1,519	42	Job.....	57
10	John.....	1,489	43	Malachi.....	51
11	II Kings.....	1,327	44	I Chronicles.....	48
12	Judges.....	683	45	I Peter.....	45
13	Joshua.....	596	46	I John.....	43
14	Jeremiah.....	525	47	Ecclesiastes.....	39
15	Ezra.....	500	48	Colossians.....	27
16	Isaiah.....	408	49	Philemon.....	25
17	II Chronicles.....	400	50.5	Zechariah.....	24
18	Nehemiah.....	390	50.5	Titus.....	24
19	Esther.....	386	52	Timothy.....	23
20	I Corinthians.....	305	53	II Thessalonians.....	18
21	Daniel.....	283	54	II Peter.....	15
22	Numbers.....	273	55	Nahum.....	13
23	Hosea.....	248	56	Micah.....	11
24	Psalms.....	244	57	Haggai.....	9
25	Amos.....	201	58	Joel.....	4
26	Proverbs.....	191	59	Zephaniah.....	1
27	Romans.....	186	63	Song of Solomon.....	0
28	Ezekiel.....	173	63	Lamentations.....	0
29	Philippians.....	170	63	Obadiah.....	0
30	James.....	168	63	Habakkuk.....	0
31	Revelation.....	154	63	II John.....	0
32	I Thessalonians.....	142	63	III John.....	0
33	Hebrews.....	139	63	Jude.....	0

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TABLE VII

The books of the Old Testament ranked according to the number of verses selected from each book. (1873-1925.)

Rank	Name of book	Number of verses used	Rank	Name of book	Number of verses used
1	Genesis	2,497	21	Ezekiel	173
2	I Samuel	2,245	22	Leviticus	135
3	Exodus	1,864	23	Ruth	116
4	I Kings	1,786	24	Deuteronomy	98
5	II Samuel	1,670	25	Jonah	61
6	II Kings	1,327	26	Job	57
7	Judges	683	27	Malachi	51
8	Joshua	596	28	I Chronicles	48
9	Jeremiah	525	29	Ecclesiastes	39
10	Ezra	500	30	Zechariah	24
11	Isaiah	408	31	Nahum	13
12	II Chronicles	400	32	Micah	11
13	Nehemiah	390	33	Haggai	9
14	Esther	386	34	Joel	4
15	Daniel	283	35	Zephaniah	1
16	Numbers	273	37.5	Song of Solomon	0
17	Hosea	248	37.5	Lamentations	0
18	Psalms	244	37.5	Obadiah	0
19	Amos	201	37.5	Habakkuk	0
20	Proverbs	191			

TABLE VIII

The books of the New Testament ranked according to the number of verses selected from each book. (1873-1925.)

Rank	Name of book	Number of verses used	Rank	Name of book	Number of verses used
1	Acts	4,882	15	II Timothy	71
2	Luke	2,558	16	Galatians	62
3	Matthew	2,012	17	I Peter	45
4	Mark	1,519	18	I John	43
5	John	1,489	19	Colossians	27
6	I Corinthians	305	20	Philemon	25
7	Romans	186	21	Titus	24
8	Philippians	170	22	I Timothy	23
9	James	168	23	II Thessalonians	18
10	Revelation	154	24	II Peter	15
11	I Thessalonians	142	26	II John	0
12	Hebrews	139	26	III John	0
13	II Corinthians	85	26	Jude	0
14	Ephesians	79			

TABLE IX

The number of lessons selected from the various books of the Bible contained in the *Improved Uniform Lessons*. (1918-1925.)

Name of book	Number of lessons	Name of book	Number of lessons
Genesis	16	Nahum	0
Exodus	10	Habakkuk	0
Leviticus	0	Zephaniah	0
Numbers	1	Haggai	0
Deuteronomy	0	Zechariah	0
Joshua	5	Malachi	1
Judges	4	Matthew	36
Ruth	2	Mark	32
I Samuel	13	Luke	37
II Samuel	3	John	18
I Kings	9	Acts	59
II Kings	8	Romans	2
I Chronicles	0	I Corinthians	4
II Chronicles	4	II Corinthians	0
Ezra	3	Galatians	1
Nehemiah	4	Ephesians	1
Esther	2	Philippians	2
Job	3	Colossians	0
Psalms	3	I Thessalonians	1
Proverbs	0	II Thessalonians	0
Ecclesiastes	0	I Timothy	0
Song of Solomon	0	II Timothy	2
Isaiah	4	Titus	0
Jeremiah	6	Philemon	1
Lamentations	0	Hebrews	0
Ezekiel	1	James	1
Daniel	4	I Peter	1
Hosea	0	II Peter	0
Joel	0	I John	2
Amos	1	II John	0
Obadiah	0	III John	0
Jonah	1	Jude	0
Micah	0	Revelation	2

TABLE X

The books of the Bible ranked according to the lessons included in the *Improved Uniform Lessons*. (1918-1925.)

Rank	Name of book	Number of lessons	Rank	Name of book	Number of lessons
1	Acts.....	59	34	Ephesians.....	I
2	Luke.....	37	34	I Thessalonians.....	I
3	Matthew.....	36	34	Philemon.....	I
4	Mark.....	32	34	James.....	I
5	John.....	18	34	I Peter.....	I
6	Genesis.....	16	53	Leviticus.....	0
7	I Samuel.....	13	53	Deuteronomy.....	0
8	Exodus.....	10	53	I Chronicles.....	0
9	I Kings.....	9	53	Job.....	0
10	II Kings.....	8	53	Proverbs.....	0
11	Jeremiah.....	6	53	Ecclesiastes.....	0
12	Joshua.....	5	53	Song of Solomon.....	0
15.5	Judges.....	4	53	Lamentations.....	0
15.5	II Chronicles.....	4	53	Hosea.....	0
15.5	Nehemiah.....	4	53	Joel.....	0
15.5	Isaiah.....	4	53	Obadiah.....	0
15.5	Daniel.....	4	53	Micah.....	0
15.5	I Corinthians.....	4	53	Nahum.....	0
20	II Samuel.....	3	53	Habakkuk.....	0
20	Ezra.....	3	53	Zephaniah.....	0
20	Psalms.....	3	53	Haggai.....	0
25	Ruth.....	2	53	Zechariah.....	0
25	Esther.....	2	53	II Corinthians.....	0
25	Philippians.....	2	53	Colossians.....	0
25	Timothy.....	2	53	II Thessalonians.....	0
25	Romans.....	2	53	I Timothy.....	0
25	I John.....	2	53	Titus.....	0
25	Revelation.....	2	53	Hebrews.....	0
34	Numbers.....	I	53	II Peter.....	0
34	Ezekiel.....	I	53	II John.....	0
34	Amos.....	I	53	III John.....	0
34	Jonah.....	I	53	Jude.....	0
34	Malachi.....	I			
34	Galatians.....	I			

TABLE XI

The number of verses selected from the several books of the Bible by the *Improved Uniform Lessons*. (1918-1925.)

Name of book	Number of verses	Name of book	Number of verses
Genesis	1,856	Nahum	0
Exodus	1,499	Habakkuk	0
Leviticus	37	Zephaniah	1
Numbers	133	Haggai	0
Deuteronomy	38	Zechariah	0
Joshua	409	Malachi	21
Judges	548	Matthew	1,167
Ruth	107	Mark	844
I Samuel	1,855	Luke	1,590
II Samuel	1,452	John	666
I Kings	1,392	Acts	3,978
II Kings	1,038	Romans	39
I Chronicles	0	I Corinthians	140
II Chronicles	120	II Corinthians	0
Ezra	439	Galatians	24
Nehemiah	309	Ephesians	20
Esther	334	Philippians	130
Job	0	Colossians	2
Psalms	81	I Thessalonians	89
Proverbs	17	II Thessalonians	0
Ecclesiastes	0	I Timothy	0
Song of Solomon	0	II Timothy	42
Isaiah	183	Titus	0
Jeremiah	355	Philemon	25
Lamentations	0	Hebrews	57
Ezekiel	87	James	114
Daniel	128	I Peter	15
Hosea	197	II Peter	4
Joel	0	I John	17
Amos	154	II John	0
Obadiah	0	III John	0
Jonah	23	Jude	0
Micah	3	Revelation	30

TABLE XII

Old Testament books ranked according to verses selected in the *Improved Uniform Lessons*. (1918-1925.)

Rank	Name of book	Number of verses	Rank	Name of book	Number of verses
1	Genesis	1,856	21	Psalms	81
2	I Samuel	1,855	22	Deuteronomy	38
3	Exodus	1,499	23	Leviticus	37
4	II Samuel	1,452	24	Jonah	23
5	I Kings	1,392	25	Malachi	21
6	II Kings	1,038	26	Proverbs	17
7	Judges	548	27	Micah	3
8	Ezra	439	28	Zephaniah	1
9	Joshua	409	34	I Chronicles	0
10	Jeremiah	355	34	Job	0
11	Esther	334	34	Ecclesiastes	0
12	Nehemiah	309	34	Song of Solomon	0
13	Hosea	197	34	Lamentations	0
14	Isaiah	183	34	Joel	0
15	Amos	154	34	Obadiah	0
16	Numbers	133	34	Nahum	0
17	Daniel	128	34	Habakkuk	0
18	II Chronicles	120	34	Haggai	0
19	Ruth	107	34	Zechariah	0
20	Ezekiel	87			

TABLE XIII

New Testament books ranked according to verses selected in the *Improved Uniform Lessons*. (1918-1925.)

Rank	Name of book	Number of verses	Rank	Name of book	Number of verses
1	Acts	3,978	15	Galatians	24
2	Luke	1,590	16	Ephesians	20
3	Matthew	1,167	17	I John	17
4	Mark	844	18	I Peter	15
5	John	666	19	II Peter	4
6	I Corinthians	140	20	Colossians	2
7	Philippians	130	24	II Corinthians	0
8	James	114	24	II Thessalonians	0
9	I Thessalonians	89	24	I Timothy	0
10	Hebrews	57	24	Titus	0
11	II Timothy	42	24	II John	0
12	Romans	39	24	III John	0
13	Revelation	30	24	Jude	0
14	Philemon	25			

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